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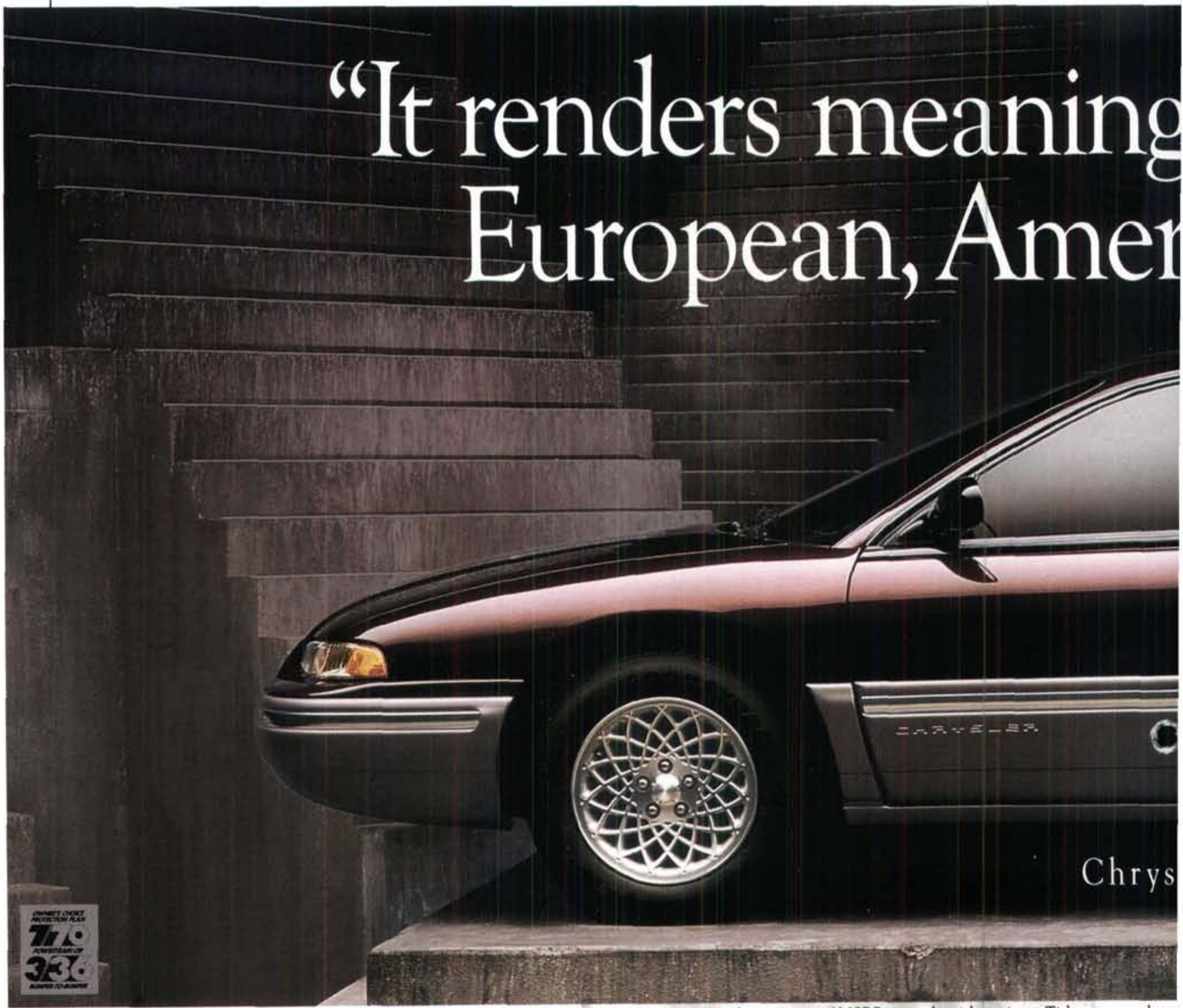
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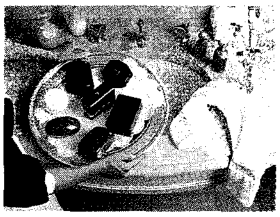

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COMMENT

THE PARDONS

WATERGATE, it has been said, was like Shakespeare—an ordered, linear drama that built to a final, and satisfying, climax. The Iran-Contra affair, in contrast, has been more like Beckett—a series of discrete, even disconnected, vignettes, in which characters wander on and off the stage, leaving matters no more settled than when they arrived. President Bush's Christmas Eve pardons of Caspar Weinberger and five other former high government officials does nothing to dispel this impression. The affair, it appears, is now over; but perhaps it isn't. There will be no more trials; unless there are. We know as much as we are ever going to know; unless we don't.

This much can be said with confidence about the pardons of Mr. Weinberger and the one other Iran-Contra figure who was still awaiting trial, Duane Clarridge, the former head of Latin-American covert operations for the Central Intelligence Agency: the pardons were wrong. And they were especially unseemly because Mr. Bush's own role in the Iran-Contra events remains, at best, dubious. Recent disclosures in the Weinberger case have further contradicted the President's repeated assertions, already amply discredited, that he was uninvolved in the decision to trade arms to Iran in return for hostages. The further revelation that the President appears to have withheld important notes from the investigation is another sign that he has more explaining to do. If Mr. Weinberger and Mr. Clarridge had gone to trial, they would perhaps have been acquitted. Perhaps, too, disclosures in their trials would have lent support to the President's explanation of his role. (They would surely have shed light on the subject.) Now we will probably never know.

An ironic beneficiary of the pardons may well be the independent counsel, Lawrence Walsh, who has conducted the investigation too slowly and too haltingly, and has used the concept of grand-jury secrecy to shield information more by whim than by the dictates of the law. Apparently, Mr. Bush believed that the defendants awaiting trial would be convicted, but by issuing the pardons he has let Mr. Walsh off the hook and has bestowed on him a form of martyrdom. Mr. Walsh no longer has to prove anything.

What is outrageous about the pardons is less the pardons themselves than the President's rationale for them. Mr. Bush said of the former officials he pardoned

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"I feel like pushing the envelope this morning, honey, starting with a little grape jelly for that bran muffin."

• •

that "their motivation—whether their actions were right or wrong—was patriotism." But, if the history of the twentieth century teaches anything, it teaches that crimes of state committed out of subjectively virtuous motives are at least as much to be feared as crimes committed out of venality. As for the pardoned men's actions, the President's agnosticism about their rightness or wrongness gave way in the next paragraph of his statement to an outright dismissal of those actions as "policy differences" that had been subjected, presumably capriciously, to "criminalization." Thus did the President slide from pardoning individuals for their crimes to denying that their crimes were crimes at all.

The offenses with which the pardoned men were charged went to the heart of the proper functioning of the constitutionally mandated separation of powers. In the mid-eighties, Congress, after heated debate about providing aid to countries that supported terrorism and to the Nicaraguan Contras, passed bills limiting such aid. After those bills were signed into law by President Reagan, members of Congress asked members of the executive branch whether they were complying with them. When many high officials of the Reagan Administration—Elliott Abrams, Robert McFarlane, John Poindexter, and Oliver North among them—answered these questions, they lied. Faced with the lies, Congress could not do its job: it could not legislate with the full facts before it.

It is true that the criminal law is a blunt and unsatisfactory instrument for dealing with the problem that is at the root of the Iran-Contra affair: political accountability. Under the American system of separated legislative and executive powers, responsibility is fragmented. This is one reason that when the political branches of the government have found themselves paralyzed in the face of some contentious issue—school segregation and abortion are two examples that come to mind—the judiciary is often obliged to step in. In other words, a certain ability to pass the buck is built into the system. But this state of affairs only makes a strict observance of the Constitution that much more important.

The point now is to determine what can be done to insure that the constitutional abuses of Iran-Contra do not recur. Mr. Walsh has rightly made the point that lying to Congress is a crime and should be treated as such. But Congress, too, has lessons to learn. The Iran-Contra affair merited a zealous and comprehensive investigation. Congress possesses many of the same powers that a criminal prosecutor does—to subpoena witnesses and documents, to confer immunity, to conduct public proceedings. If Congress had done its job properly in 1987, the Walsh investigation might not have been such a fragmented and drawn-out affair. But those hearings turned into a rushed, circuslike political slugfest, which did nothing to settle the larger question of wars, secret or open, undertaken by the executive. This muddled issue is among Mr. Bush's legacies to Bill Clinton.

Mr. Bush's approach was shaped during his tutelage under President Nixon, who struck hard at the constitutional role of Congress in the making of foreign policy and of war. Mr. Nixon's executive war in Cambodia (with the secret bombings that were among the proposed articles of his impeachment) provoked Congress into passing the War Powers Act over his veto. Mr. Bush, as President, fiercely resisted what he saw as congressional intrusions. His disdain for Congress and for the War Powers Act was never more apparent than in the case of the Gulf War. Not until he had placed half a million soldiers in the Saudi desert was he forced (by congressional doves) to seek statutory approval of the use of force, and by then the commitment was a fait accompli. If he had been allowed to act as he wished, he would have gone to war without the legitimacy of a congressional majority; and if the war had gone badly he would have fostered a constitutional crisis.

Last fall, Mr. Clinton was excoriated for his long-ago opposition to the war in Vietnam. Indeed, the young Clinton's first experience in government was as an aide to his home-state senator J. William Fulbright, the chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, during Mr. Fulbright's attempt to expose the faulty constitutional and policy premises of that war. Now Mr. Clinton is about to become President, at a time when American troops have been deployed in a far corner of Africa—with wide public support, but without so much as a hint of congressional approval. It will be the new President's task to break the pattern that evolved during the Cold War. He will have the chance—and the obligation—to establish a concordance with Congress, perhaps a rewriting of the War Powers Act which can find approval at both ends of Pennsylvania Avenue. Mr. Bush's pardons, the closing gestures of a monarchical Presidential era brought to grief, could spur such an effort. Then, as the legatee to his mentor Senator Fulbright, Mr. Clinton might end the chronic stalemate over the arrogance of power. ♦

GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
17	18	19	13	14	15	16

THE THEATRE

The Happy Few

THE 1989 film "Henry V" established the thin-lipped Kenneth Branagh as the most visible English classical actor of his generation. Meanwhile, there are several other young British actors who have recently been attracting even greater critical acclaim for classical work on London stages. A short list of these performers might include Simon Russell Beale, Ralph Fiennes, Alex Jennings, and Mark Rylance; of this group, only Mr. Rylance has been seen by theatregoers in America. His pajama-clad Hamlet, which was performed last season in Pittsburgh and Cambridge, was the last R.S.C. Prince before that of Mr. Branagh, who is playing the Dane in London through March 11.

As if to encourage comparisons, Mr. Rylance will soon be performing Mr. Branagh's best-known role in New York: Theatre for a New Audience opens its production of "Henry V" this week. It's an unusual choice, since Mr. Rylance's excellence in "poetic" Shakespearean parts like Romeo and Prospero—very roughly, he's Gielgud to Mr. Branagh's Olivier—would seem to have prepared him more for "Richard II" (a play, it should be noted, that hasn't had a worthy New York staging in years). Whatever the exact degree of Mr. Rylance's aptness for the role of Henry, though, there's no question that his is the local performance to watch right now.

OPENINGS AND PREVIEWS

(Please call the phone number listed with the theatre for schedule and ticket information.)

ANNA CHRISTIE—Liam Neeson, Natasha Richardson, Rip Torn, and Anne Meara head the cast of the Roundabout Theatre Company's revival of the play by Eugene O'Neill. David Leveaux directed. Previews on Jan. 13. Opens Jan. 14 at 7. (Criterion Center, Broadway at 45th St. 869-8400.)

THE BOILER ROOM—A play by Reuben González. Three performances a week are in English; four are in Spanish. Staged by Alex Colón. In previews. (Puerto Rican Traveling Theatre, 304 W. 47th St. 354-1293.)

BORN GUILTY—Zach Grenier in Ari Roth's adaptation of a 1988 book by Peter Sichrovsky. In previews. (American Jewish Theatre, 307 W. 26th St. 633-9797.)

BOYS CHOIR OF HARLEM & FRIENDS LIVE ON BROADWAY—The choir celebrates its twenty-fifth anniversary in a staged show. Previews Jan. 14-16. Opens Jan. 19 at 7, and runs through Jan. 31. (Richard Rodgers, 226 W. 46th St. 221-1211.)

HENRY V—Mark Rylance has the title role in this Theatre for a New Audience production. Barry Kyle directed. Previews through Jan. 15. Opens Jan. 16 at 7. (St. Clement's, 423 W. 46th St. 279-4200.)

JEFFREY—A comedy by Paul Rudnick, with John Michael Higgins as a young gay man who has decided to give up sex. Directed by Christopher Ashley. Previews through Jan. 17. Opens Jan. 19 at 8. (WPA Theatre, 519 W. 23rd St. 206-0523.)

JEWISH REPERTORY THEATRE—The second of four shows this season is **THEDA BARA AND THE FRONTIER RABBI,** a musical comedy. The book is by Jeff Hochhauser; the score is by Bob Johnston; and the lyrics are by both Mr. Hochhauser and Mr. Johnston. Previews from Jan. 13 to Jan. 17 matinée. Opens Jan. 17 at 7. (Playhouse 91, at 316 E. 91st St. 831-2000.)

THE LAST YANKEE—The première of a new play by Arthur Miller, with Tom Aldredge, Frances Conroy, Rose Gregorio, and John Heard. In previews. (Manhattan Theatre Club, at City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 581-1212.)

SCAPIN—An adaptation, by Andrei Belgrader and Shelley Berc, of Molière's comedy, which incorporates gospel, blues, and rap music by Rusty Magee. Stanley Tucci has the lead. In previews. (CSC, 136 E. 13th St. 677-4210.)

THE YEARS—A new play by Cindy Lou Johnson, with William Fichtner, Julie Hagerty, Marcia Gay Harden, Nancy Hower, Paul McCrane, and Frank Whaley. In previews. (Manhattan Theatre Club, at City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 581-1212.)

YORK THEATRE COMPANY—The third play of the season is **A DISTANCE FROM CALCUTTA,** by P. J. Barry. Opens Jan. 15 at 8, and runs through Feb. 7. (2 E. 90th St. 534-5366.)

OPENED RECENTLY

BUBBE MEISES, BUBBE STORIES—A musical in which a granddaughter recalls her grandmothers and their stories. Written by, and starring, Ellen Gould. (Cherry Lane, 38 Commerce St. 989-2020.)

DESHIMA—A new work by Ping Chong. (La Mama Annex, 66 E. 4th St. 475-7710. Closes Jan. 17.)

THE DESTINY OF ME—A new play by Larry Kramer. (Lucille Lortel, 121 Christopher St. 239-6200.)

FORBIDDEN BROADWAY 1993—A new edition of the long-running show spoofs "Guys and Dolls," "Crazy for You," and "Jelly's Last Jam," among other targets. (Theatre East, 211 E. 60th St. 838-9090.)

THE GOOD NATUR'D MAN—A 1768 play by Oliver Goldsmith. The cast includes Robin Leslie Brown, Frank Geraci, and Kurt Rhoads. Directed by Anthony Cornish. (Pearl, 125 W. 22nd St. 645-7708.)

HELLO MUDDAH, HELLO FADDUH—A musical based on the song parodies of Allan Sherman. It was conceived and written by Douglas Bernstein and Rob Krausz. Stephen Berger, Tovah Feldshuh, Jason Graae, Leslie Klein, and Paul Kreppel make up the cast. (Circle in the Square Downtown, 159 Bleecker St. 254-6330.)

JACQUES BREL IS ALIVE AND WELL AND LIVING IN PARIS—A revival of the musical put together from the works of M. Brel by Eric Blau and Mort Shuman. (Village Gate, 160 Bleecker St. 475-5120.)

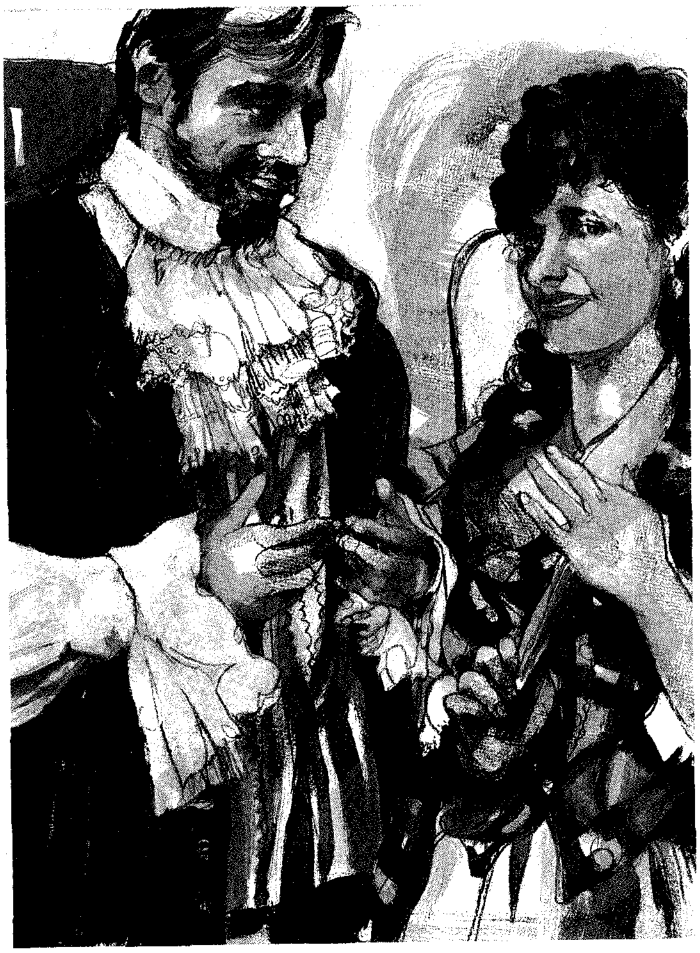
JEAN COCTEAU REPERTORY—Presenting **THE IDIOT,** an adaptation, by David Fishelson, of Dostoevsky's novel. Mr. Fishelson was the director. (Bouwerie Lane Theatre, 330 Bowery, at Bond St. 677-0060.)

NEW YORK GILBERT & SULLIVAN PLAYERS—Presenting **H.M.S. PINAFORE,** with John Astin. (Symphony Space, Broadway at 95th St. 864-5400. Closes Jan. 17.)

OLEANNA—David Mamet, in fine, curmudgeonly form, takes on political correctness, sexual harassment, and a number of other isms in this brief, powerful drama that continues to stir up the ideologues. Rebecca Pidgeon and William H. Macy lend articulate support to a play whose skepticism is as evenhanded as it is corrosive. Not to be missed. (11/16/92) (Orpheum, 126 Second Ave., at 8th St. 307-4100.)

REMEMBRANCE—Set in Belfast, Graham Reid's absorbing and often entertaining play tells the story of a Protestant man and a Catholic woman—both of them widowed and in their sixties—who slowly fall in love. Milo O'Shea and Frances Sternhagen can seldom have been better than they are in the leading roles. (10/12/92) (John Houseman, 450 W. 42nd St. 967-9077.)

RUTHLESS!—This camp musical about a monster child star is harmless and amusing enough—assuming you can stomach the little girl. (Players, 115 Macdougal St. 254-5076.)



Kurt Rhoads and Robin Leslie Brown in "The Good Natur'd Man"

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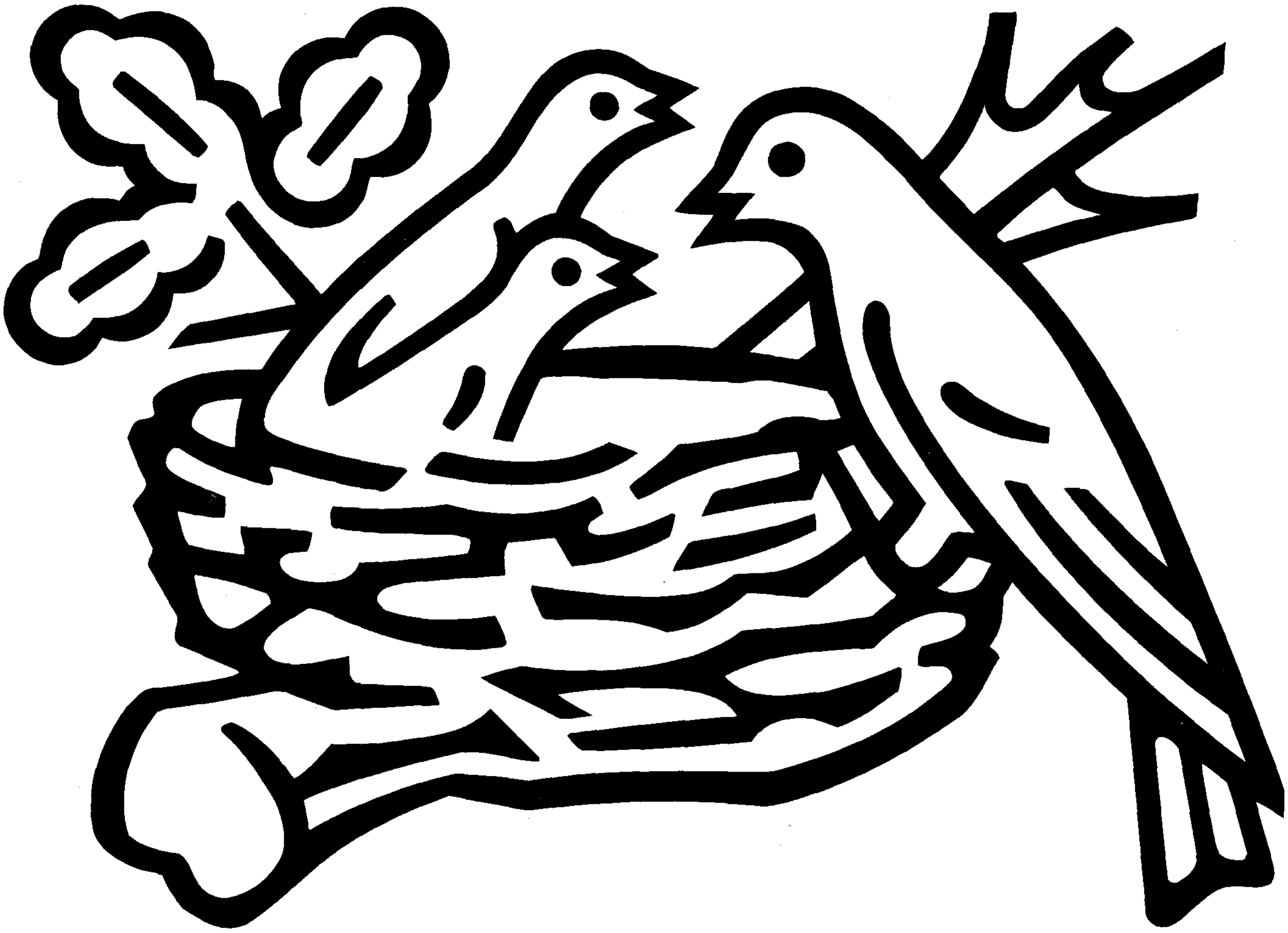

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THE THEATRE—Cont'd

The Sisters Rosensweig—Wendy Wasserstein's new play, a comedy with serious undertones, is about the reunion in London of three American Jewish sisters—an international banker, a travel writer, and a wife and mother who's a professional dispenser of advice. They are portrayed by Jane Alexander, Christine Estabrook, and Madeline Kahn. The spirit of Chekhov hovers but never intrudes. Laughter is continuous. (11/2/92) (Mitzi E. Newhouse, Lincoln Center. 239-6200.)

Someone Who'll Watch Over Me—Alec McCowen (English), Stephen Rea (Irish), and James McDaniel (American) give stunning performances as hostages in Beirut in Frank McGuinness's moving and humorous play. Robin Lefèvre directed. (12/7/92) (Booth, 222 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

Spic-O-Rama—Six well-written characters who have found not only their author but also their performer in John Leguizamo's scintillating and scathing one-man show about Latino life in the Big City. Leguizamo is vivacious, inventive, and very, very funny. The show is original and scenically ingenious. (11/9/92) (Westside, 407 W. 43rd St. 307-4100. Closes Jan. 24.)

Tales from Hollywood—The New York première of a play by Christopher Hampton. Performed by the Barrow Group, including Lee Brock, Keely Eastly, Michael Marcus, Michael Warren Powell, Tom Riis Farrell, Mark Shannon, and Stephen Singer. (La Mama, 74A E. 4th St. 475-7710. Closes Jan. 24.)

LONG RUNS

BEAU JEST: Lamb's, 130 W. 44th St. 997-1780. . . . **BLUE MAN GROUP/TUBES:** Astor Place Theatre, 434 Lafayette St. 254-4370. . . . **CATS:** Winter Garden, Broadway at 50th St. 239-6200. . . . **CONVERSATIONS WITH MY FATHER:** Royale, 242 W. 45th St. 239-6200. . . . **CRAZY FOR YOU:** Shubert, 225 W. 44th St. 239-6200. . . . **FALSETTOS:** Golden, 252 W. 45th St. 239-6200. . . . **THE FANTASTICKS:** Sullivan Street Playhouse, 181 Sullivan St., at Bleecker St. 674-3838. . . . **FIVE GUYS NAMED MOE:** Eugene O'Neill, 230 W. 49th St. 239-6200. . . . **FOREVER PLAID:** Steve McGraw's, 158 W. 72nd St. 595-7400. . . . **GUYS AND DOLLS:** Martin Beck, 302 W. 45th St. 239-6200. . . . **JELLY'S LAST JAM:** Virginia, 245 W. 52nd St. 239-6200. . . . **LES MISÉRABLES:** Imperial, 249 W. 45th St. 239-6200. . . . **MISS SAIGON:** Broadway Theatre, Broadway at 53rd St. 239-6200. . . . **NUNSENSE:** Douglas Fairbanks, 432 W. 42nd St. 239-4321. . . . **PERFECT CRIME:** Theatre Four, 424 W. 55th St. 695-3401. . . . **THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA:** Majestic, 245 W. 44th St. 239-6200. . . . **TONY N' TINA'S WEDDING:** St. John's Church, 81 Christopher St. 279-4200. . . . **THE WILL ROGERS FOLLIES:** Palace, Broadway at 47th St. 730-8200.

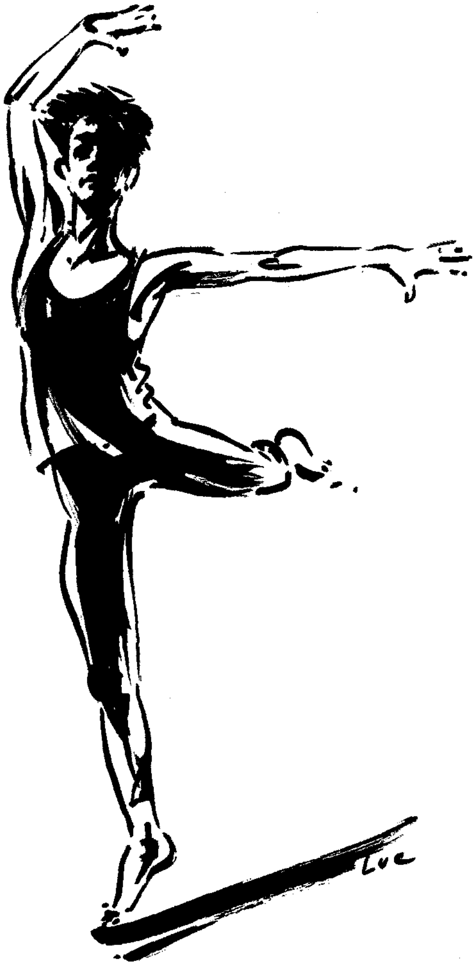
DANCE

Local Heroine

SARAH SKAGGS, downtown dancer and choreographer, is talking about her newest piece, "Higher Ground"—a performance event, with dancing by the audience before and after the show, to be held on January 16, 23, and 30, in the gym of the St. Patrick's Youth Center (268 Mulberry Street):

"A lot of people see ethnological influences in my dances. I worked with the modern-dance choreographer Dana Reitz, and have improvisation in my background. This past summer, I studied Legong dance, in Bali, and what I took away from that was the timing of wrists and eyes in the presence of the gamelan. I'm very interested in ritual dance. For this concert, I'm mixing high art—my company in performance—and club dancing, which is considered a low form.

"We had a trial run in June—a one-night deal. About two hundred and fifty people showed up, most of them residents of Little Italy, where I live. They came from the coffee shops, the stores, and the restaurants, and they brought their kids. So I can tell you what will happen. The doors of the gym in St. Patrick's Youth Center will open at 9 P.M., and my d.j., Steven Harvey, will start to mix what we call ethno-techno music—that's ethnological music with a beat. Then, at 10 P.M., my company comes on and we'll dance pretty much nonstop for forty-five minutes. What happened in June was that, when we finished dancing, the audience couldn't wait to jump in."



Molissa Fenley at the Joyce Theatre

LUC VAN DER KOU

New York City Ballet—Jan. 13 at 8: "The Goldberg Variations" and "The Four Seasons." . . . ¶ Jan. 14 at 8: "Swan Lake," "JAZZ (Six Syncopated Movements)," and "Stravinsky Violin Concerto." . . . ¶ Jan. 15 at 8: "Serenade," "Firebird," and "Jeu de Cartes." . . . ¶ Jan. 16 at 2: "The Goldberg Variations" and "Cortège Hongrois." . . . ¶ Jan. 16 at 8: "Stravinsky Violin Concerto," "JAZZ (Six Syncopated Movements)," and "The Four Seasons." . . . ¶ Jan. 17 at 1: "Swan Lake," "Reunions," and "The Four Seasons." . . . ¶ Jan. 17 at 7: "La Source," "JAZZ (Six Syncopated Movements)," and "Symphony in Three Movements." . . . ¶ Jan. 19 at 8: "The Goldberg Variations" and "Stravinsky Violin Concerto." (New York State Theatre. 870-5570. Through Feb. 21.)

Molissa Fenley—A solo engagement consisting of "Sightings," "Nullarbor," and "Channel." (Joyce Theatre, 175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. 242-0800. Jan. 13-16 at 8 and Jan. 17 at 2 and 7:30.)

"To the Pointe"—Contemporary ballets by L.A.E. Beckles, Martha Connerton, Lonné Moretton, and Lynn Parkerson. Performed by Deborah Dawn, Lissette Salgado, and others. (Church of the Holy Trinity, 316 E. 88th St. Jan. 14-16 at 8 and Jan. 17 at 3. For reservations, call 876-4961.)

Wendy Rogers—A Bay-area dancer, in "Aria" (a duet) and "Solo with Snares." Presented by Danspace Project. (St. Mark's In-the-Bouwerie, Second Ave. at 10th St. 674-8194. Jan. 14-16 at 8:30.)

Sarah Skaggs Dance Company—In "Higher Ground," a site-specific work. (St. Patrick's Youth Center, 268 Mulberry St. Jan. 16 at 10. For reservations, call 924-0077.)

Zorongo Flamenco Dance Theatre—Opening performance of an engagement by a troupe of thirteen flamenco dancers, musicians, and singers in its New York début. The program consists of the full-length dance/theatre work "Flor," based on Jorge Amado's "Dona Flor and Her Two Husbands." (Joyce Theatre, 175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. 242-0800. Jan. 19 at 8. Through Jan. 24.)

NIGHT LIFE

Beyond the Grunge

THE band Come may have an attention-grabbing name, but it's also a misleading one: the Boston-based group's bleak, anguished music puts all thought of sex far out of mind. Their début album, "Eleven: Eleven," is an eleven-song nuclear winter. That may not sound like much of a recommendation, but the songs have a cumulative effect that's mesmerizing. And all that darkness seems to have struck a chord among alternative-rock aficionados, who have hailed the group unanimously.

Come—which will be at CBGB on January 16—is led by singer-songwriter-guitarist Thalia Zedek, a former member of the New York art-rock band Live Skull. Zedek has a gruff, androgynous voice that recalls Patti Smith and Janis Joplin. On "Eleven: Eleven," her singing is often submerged beneath the guitars, as if she were drowning; rather than call out for help, though, she thrashes and snarls in the waves. Zedek has battled a heroin addiction over the years, and the group's music has the disorder and the desperate edge that are the hallmarks of drug rock. Their style might be termed mope-dirt-grunge rock. The guitar work is raw and loose, with lots of bending, sliding, quavering, and distortion; the drummer is given to sudden furious outbursts. At times, the group sounds like a mirthless version of Sonic Youth. Come possesses a kind of stubborn integrity—music with less sugarcoating would be hard to find.

(A highly arbitrary listing, in which boldface type is used to pick out some of the more notable performers in town. . . . ¶ Call the phone number listed for performance schedules and, since musicians and night-club proprietors live complicated lives that are subject to last-minute change, to confirm engagements.)

Algonquin Hotel, 59 W. 44th St. (840-6800)—**ANDREA MARCOVICCI'S** cabaret juggernaut rumbles into its third month in the old-timey environs of the Oak Room. The singer is currently offering a program called "Double Torch." The late show on Fridays and Saturdays is "Just Kern." Dining.

Ballroom, 253 W. 28th St. (244-3005)—A sleek, green-walled room with brass railings and mounted O'Keeffian animal skulls. Look closer and you'll find that the skulls are wearing earrings. After the show, be sure to check out the adjoining restaurant/tapas bar, which looks like the indoor food market of your dreams. **ROSA MARIA** took part in last year's Brazilian festival here. The jazz-and-blues singer will be here through Jan. 17, dedicating her sets to a hybrid of African and Caribbean music called "samba-reggae." **LENY ANDRADE** is here for a two-week stint beginning Jan. 19. Closed Mondays.

Birdland, 2745 Broadway, at 105th St. (749-2228)—This northern restaurant-bar, an airy two-tiered space with pastel walls and potted greenery, is a shade too slick for Columbia students but just right for post-collegiate jazz fans. The name is taken from the long-gone midtown pleasure dome that featured Bird himself. Ricky Ford will be in for the weekend of Jan. 15-16, with Lew Soloff, Hilton Ruiz, and Steve Turre. Dining.

Blue Note, 131 W. 3rd St., near Sixth Ave. (475-8592)—Once you get past this club's rough bits—the tourists, the cramped seating, the stiff prices—you're likely to find yourself face to face with some of the biggest names in jazz. The long-standing fusion outfit known as **SPYRO GYRA** is here through Jan. 17; **REBECCA PARRIS** comes in on Jan. 18; and **FREDDIE HUBBARD** starts up on Jan. 19.

Bottom Line, 15 W. 4th St., at Mercer St. (228-6300)—This big, airy folk-and-rock club tends to be the site of a lot of music-industry bashes. If you have trouble getting tickets to the early show, it's usually because some record company has bought the place out. The atmosphere here, as a result, can be a bit weird: the record-company types have to have fun, because their own artists are onstage, but they can't have too much fun, because their bosses are watching. The later shows, though they're not as well attended and though they tend to run late, are much looser in spirit. **DAVE MASON** has ridden many waves—and troughs—over the course of his long career. He helped form the whirling, adventurous jazz-pop band Traffic; he had a successful solo career for a while; then, in the early eighties, he was singing in beer ads. Mason stops in for a performance on Jan. 15; performing with him will be **DANNY KALB** and **JIMMY VIVINO.** Burgers, fries, and other things to make your heart beat faster.

Bradley's, 70 University Pl., at 11th St. (228-6440)—Within the narrow walls of this venerable piano-and-bass preserve, everything is easy on the eyes and ears. A trio consisting of pianist **MIKE LE DONNE,** bassist **PETER WASHINGTON,** and drummer **KENNY WASHINGTON** is at work through Jan. 16. Dining.

Carlyle Hotel, Madison Ave. at 76th St. (744-1600)—The Café Carlyle, a snug, windowless enclave in the doorman district, features discreet waiters, wraparound pastel murals, and the **MODERN JAZZ QUARTET,** which has just begun a three-week engagement. The quartet has been doing its fastidious swinging for more than thirty years and has more than four hundred pieces in its repertoire. . . . ¶ **BARBARA CARROLL** presides across the hall, in Bemelmans Bar.

CBGB & OMFUG, 315 Bowery, at Bleecker St. (982-4052)—The city's most famed rock club—a dark, narrow cave with neon-beer-sign stalactites and ancestral graffiti—is part sacred burial ground and part historic landmark, but it hasn't succumbed to nostalgia: new and used bands of every stripe continue to pass through nightly. **COME** is here on Jan. 16.

Duplex, 61 Christopher St., at Seventh Ave. (255-5438)—A two-floor entertainment center. The bright, clean, wedge-shaped downstairs bar has French windows giving on to the bustle of Seventh Avenue, but the clamor indoors is far greater. Everyone is a star here—the pianist, the bartender, and the waitresses sing/shout pop standards with risqué lyrics and fire off wisecracks across the room; patrons are encouraged to take the mike, too. Upstairs, there's a quieter bar and a cabaret, where you'll find a variety of performers nightly.

Eagle Tavern, 355 W. 14th St. (924-0275)—An Irish bar, way out on the Western edge of town, where the great potholed boulevards turn to cobblestones, and the world across the Hudson flashes its come-hither signs. The back room has Hibernian sounds on Fridays. Fiddle player **WILLIE KELLY** and flutist **SIOBHAN KELLY** perform on Jan. 15.

Fat Tuesday's, 190 Third Ave., at 17th St. (533-7900)—A softly lit, low-ceilinged jazz preserve. **ROLAND HANNA,** a pianist who has served with Sarah Vaughan, the New York Jazz Sextet, and the U.S. Army, has at times in his career been wary of night clubs, preferring to try out original material in concert halls about forty blocks north of what he has referred to as "the smoke and the booze and the 'I don't care.'" In recent years, however, Hanna has been sighted downtown playing everything from turn-of-the-century ragtime to Miles Davis. He and **CARRIE SMITH** will perform here through Jan. 17, and the **PHIL WOODS** quintet is at work as of Jan. 19. On Mondays, guitarist-inventor **LES PAUL,** the Thomas Edison of reverb, leads a trio. Dining.

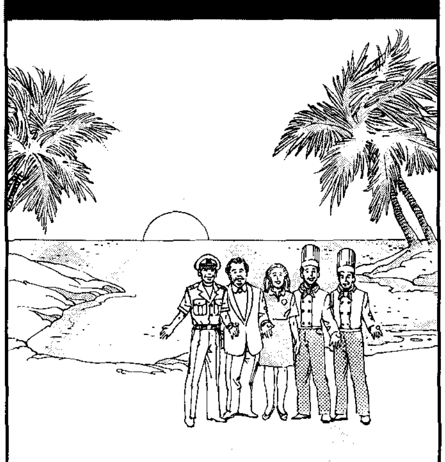
J's, 2581 Broadway, at 97th St. (666-3600)—An Upper West Side jazz room, one steep flight up from the hurly-burly. Jazz people are on the premises nightly. Pianist **JOHN SERRY** leads a trio on Jan. 14; the **JUDY BARNETT** sextet appears on Jan. 15; **DICK HYMAN** is here on Jan. 18; and the **DARYL SHERMAN** trio comes in on Jan. 19. Dining.

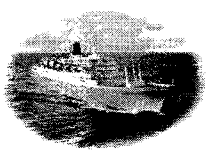
Knickerbocker, 33 University Pl., at 9th St. (228-8490)—A busy bar-and-grill in the piano-bass district. The musicians set up in the dining room, a clubby-looking space with leather banquettes and well-preserved collectibles: Sunday *Herald Tribune* covers, First World War posters, Hirschfeld cartoons. Up front, at the bar, you can keep your eye on the musicians, the conversationalists, and sidewalk life. Pianist **CAROL BRITTO** is here Jan. 13-16; bassist **MICHAEL MOORE** joins her Jan. 15-16.

Knitting Factory, 47 E. Houston St., near Mulberry St. (219-3055)—The club most likely to feature an electric-rake player. Run by a couple of forward-looking Wisconsinites, the Knitting Factory takes in all manner of neo-this and post-that ensembles. The atmosphere is low-key bohemian—it's like a frat house for the avant-garde. Guitarist **MARC RIBOT** is here Jan. 15-16. On Jan. 17, the Knitting Factory will be the site of the World Cultural Evening, with Big Joe, Marc Sloan's Lower End Quintet, and the Sambanditos; on Jan. 18, a slew of performers come through the door, among them Andy Laster's Hydra, Patience Higgins, and Drew Gress; then, on Jan. 19, Devil's Breakfast, Colored Greens, and Astro Zombies will be on the premises.

Maxwell's, 1039 Washington St., Hoboken. (1-201 798-4064)—The bands that play here today will be playing somewhere more expensive tomorrow. The Vacant Lot, the World Famous Blue Jays, and the Friggs come in on Jan. 16.

Michael's Pub, 211 E. 55th St. (758-2272)—The Jelly Roll Morton tribute that's been in session since October has been extended indefinitely. **VERNEL BAGNERIS** portrays the self-proclaimed inventor of jazz with elegance, verve, and compassion, providing an inti-





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CUNARD

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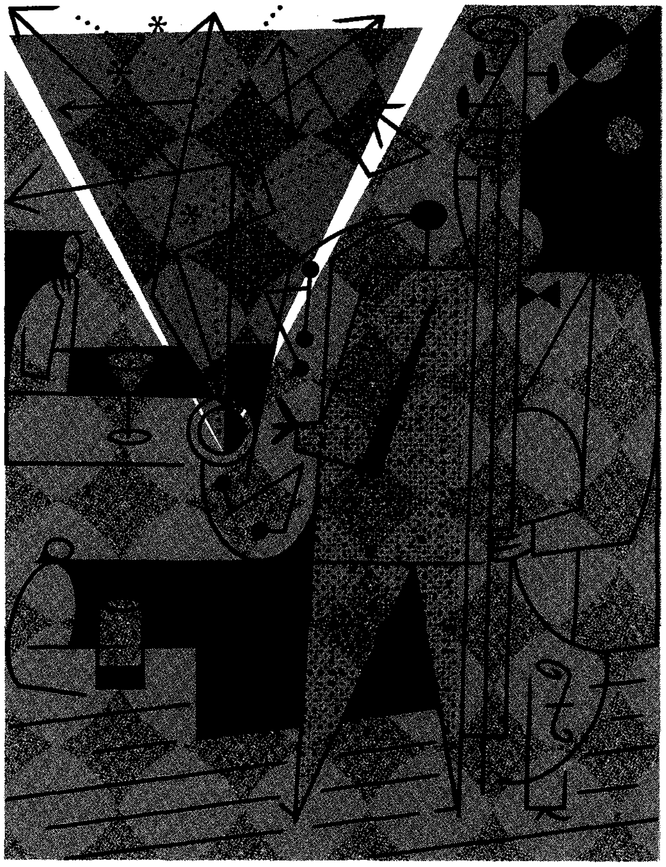


mate counterbalance to the psychologically tortured depiction currently being purveyed on Broadway. Bagneris bases his script on interviews that Jelly Roll taped in the thirties, and intersperses virtuosic renditions of sixteen numbers—all packed into little more than an hour. Pianist Morten Gunnar Larsen complements him capably at the keyboard.

Rainbow & Stars, 30 Rockefeller Plaza. (632-5000)—A moondust-in-your-hair cabaret where a club soda costs, well, a *lot.* **MARY CLEERE HARAN** is here through the end of January. Dining. Closed Mondays.

Red Blazer Too, 349 W. 46th St. (262-3112)—A place where a fella and a gal can put on the feedbag, get a little tight, and cut a rug. Mondays belong to the Smith Street Jazz Society, Tuesdays and Fridays to **VINCE GIORDANO AND THE NIGHTHAWKS,** Thursdays to Stan Rubin's big band, and Saturdays to Bob Cantwell and His Stompers. Bob Thosen's big band will be in on Jan. 13.

Skep, 527 Broome St. (219-2626)—An artily spare basement coffee shop and performance space located in a niche of SoHo that's lately been discovered in a big way. But while its neighbors are overrun with trendy youth on the make, Skep has a loose, anti-fashion atmosphere—it's SoHo boho. Closed Sundays.

Sounds of Brazil, 204 Varick St., at W. Houston St. (243-4940)—The closest thing in Manhattan to a rain forest, this venerable club has many selling points: tropical drinks, Brazilian food, faux palm trees, a thatch-roofed bar. The live music is primarily from Africa, Brazil, and the Caribbean, and the dance floor is usually hopping. **EDDIE PALMIERI** is here for La Trópica Night on Jan. 18.

Sweet Basil, 88 Seventh Ave. S., at Bleecker St. (242-1785)—A pretty serious jazz shrine where you have to pass within inches of the stage to reach the rest rooms. This is significant because, if you head to the bathroom during a set, the crowd is likely to think you're a guest soloist. Pianist **MC COY TYNER,** whose playing can be big and grand or soft and whispering, leads a trio here through Jan. 17. (Tyner's very able partners are bassist **AVERY SHARPE** and drummer **AARON SCOTT.**) The **DON GROLNICK** quintet starts work on Jan. 19, and an electrified big band belonging to trumpeter **MILES EVANS** is in action on Mondays. Dining.

Time Café, 380 Lafayette St.. (533-7000)—Hidden inside this sleek and trendy restaurant is a two-story club called Fez. Upstairs is a sumptous Moroccan bar and lounge appointed with satin couches, mosaic tables, and Arabic-style fixtures. The downstairs room, where bands perform, is rather plain by comparison, but still a comfortable spot to take in a show. The **MINGUS BIG BAND** packs them in every Thursday. The fourteen-piece ensemble, directed by saxophonists **CRAIG HANDY** and **ALEX FOSTER,** concentrates exclusively on the tricky, cacophonous work of its catalyst, Charles Mingus. Dining.

Tompkins Square Restaurant, 141 Avenue A, at 9th St. (260-4798)—A homey night spot from which you can watch East Village funkazoids walk by in their platform shoes and their Cat-in-the-Hat head gear. The restaurant is directly across from Tompkins Square Park, and it's split down the middle to separate those who drink from those who eat *and* drink. The menu is vegetarian-friendly. The atmosphere is a bit old-fashioned. Just now, there are some white Christmas lights strung up over the bar; there's an informal art show on the walls; and jazz outfits are on the stage Thursdays through Saturdays. Vocalist Adele Zane will be on hand on Jan. 14, Steve Packenham is in on Jan. 15. The Latin Rhythm Devils take over on Jan. 16.

Tramps, 45 W. 21st St. (727-7788)—Thanks to low lighting, muralled pillars, ironwork, and a beautifully restored old tin ceiling, this loft space manages to feel cozy. The sound system can be overwhelming, but the place is big enough to accommodate both those who want to lose their hearing and those who don't. Zydeco, soul, blues, and rock are the main order of business here. **CHUCK BROWN AND THE SOUL SEARCHERS** will be in on Jan. 16.

Village Vanguard, 178 Seventh Ave. S., at 11th St. (255-4037)—This slice-of-pie-shaped basement has an illustrious history that embraces everyone from Judy Holliday to Lenny Bruce, from Pete Seeger and Leadbelly to Miles Davis and Sonny Rollins. The **LOU DONALDSON** quartet is here through Jan. 17, and **LARRY CORYELL** leads a quartet of his own as of Jan. 19. Mondays are reserved for the **VANGUARD JAZZ ORCHESTRA.**

Wetlands, 161 Hudson St. (966-4225)—Home to an endless Summer of Love. Wetlands is a groovy, psychedelic, thoroughly Green night club. It is filled more or less nightly with young bands who like to play long, swirling jams and throngs of young Deadheads who like to listen to them. Musicians from the Black Rock Coalition will be on the premises on Jan. 17.

Zinno, 126 W. 13th St. (924-5182)—A rarity among jazz clubs: somewhere you'd go to eat even if there were *no music.* The food is Italian, the atmosphere is pastels and soft lights, and the musicians, who set up in a room between the bar and the dining room, are first-rate. Pianist **JOHN BUNCH,** guitarist **BUCKY PIZZARELLI,** and bassist **JAY LEONHART** are at work through Jan. 16; pianist **JANE JARVIS** and bassist **MILT HINTON** begin a week-long engagement on Jan. 18. Closed Sundays.

EDGE OF NIGHT LIFE

DEPLORING the growing popularity of a once secret hideaway is as short-sighted as it is selfish, because if you were to remain the only person patronizing your particular oasis how long do you think it would be before they folded the tent? Nevertheless, while no one has toyed with Ocean Drive's spectacular sunsets, the raging international chic of Miami's South Beach has spawned a disquieting tradeoff—ethnicity for economics. Latin rhythms, colors, aromas, congeniality, and grinding pelvic grace used to permeate every aspect of Miami's nocturnal pleasures, but this season a toned-down Continental flair is taking over.

For example, the opening antics at Les Bains (753 Washington Avenue), a transplanted version of the Paris night spot, introduced Miami to unabashed pushing and shoving (even at the "exclusive" back entrance), strong-arming doormen, surly bartenders, and exorbitant drink prices, all in a handsome, banker-free setting filled with a uniformly black-clad crowd so intent on dropping European titles that you wouldn't have been surprised if Frederick the Great made an appearance. At 2 A.M., as the crowd began to thin, six ferocious doormen were busy keeping out three would-be patrons. A departing Frenchwoman brushed past the trio and cooed, "It's just like Paris." She was proud of that.

IN ANOTHER CATEGORY—PERFORMANCE ART, ETC.

"Gold"—A performance piece by John Fleming and Louise Smith, of the Otrabanda Company. (Downtown Art Co., 64 E. 4th St. 732-1227. Jan. 13-16 at 8 and Jan. 17 at 5.)

Penny Arcade—In her show "Bitch! Dyke! Faghag! Whore!" (Top of the Gate, 160 Bleecker St. 475-5120. Fridays and Saturdays at 8.)

Lisa Kron—The actress/performance artist recounts "101 Humiliating Stories." (P.S. 122, 150 First Ave., at 9th St. 477-5288. Jan. 14-17 at 7:30. Through Jan. 31.)

J.D. KING

ART

Dig It

At the always inviting Shepherd gallery, there is an exhibition of drawings and small paintings by Squire Vickers (21 East 84th Street; through January 30). Vickers (1872-1947), who studied architecture at Cornell, was the principal architect of the New York subway system from 1906 to 1942, the period that saw the evolution of the present-day Seventh Avenue and Lexington Avenue lines. Vickers also helped design some of the ceramic work for the stations, such as the plaques at Canal Street and Christopher Street. He rendered them in a cheerfully austere American Arts and Crafts style, taking care to make them neat and flat and therefore easy to clean. (He was not, for example, responsible for the Astor Place station's beaver relief, which was the work of Heins & La Farge, who favored a lusher, Della Robbia-inspired look.)

When Vickers was done with his urban obligations, he went home, up the Hudson, to Grand View, where he let loose and painted fervent little landscapes that evoke both D. H. Lawrence and Vuillard. Vickers, who never travelled outside the United States, was also given to painting fantasy metropolises, and several of these are in the show, including one with an Arabian motif that would make a great set for "Sinbad the Sailor." But no matter how far whimsy carried him, this artist rarely forgot his bridges and tunnels.

MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES

Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 82nd St.—"Fashion and History: A Dialogue" is the first installation in the redesigned Costume Institute. . . . ¶ Part 2 of "The Century of Tung Ch'i-ch'ang" explores the pioneering abstractionist's influence on artists of the later seventeenth century. Through Jan. 10. . . . ¶ "Drawing for Design" includes sketches and finished pieces by designers, architects, and artists from Christopher Dresser to Robert Venturi. . . . ¶ "The Royal City of Susa: Ancient Near Eastern Treasures in the Louvre." Two hundred works in copper, bronze, stone, and clay. Through March 7. . . . ¶ The show of paintings, drawings, and sculpture from the Musée des Beaux-Arts, Lille, includes works by Rubens, Goya, Delacroix, van Gogh, Fra Bartolommeo, and others. Through Jan. 17. . . . ¶ Twenty-five examples of elaborately inscribed and decorated medieval Islamic garments. Through March 14. . . . ¶ Two series of color photographs by Shomei Tomatsu: one depicts *Sakura*, or cherry-blossom time; the other, flotsam and jetsam washed up on a beach. Through Jan. 31. (Open Tuesdays through Sundays, 9:30 to 5:15, and Friday and Saturday evenings until 8:45.)

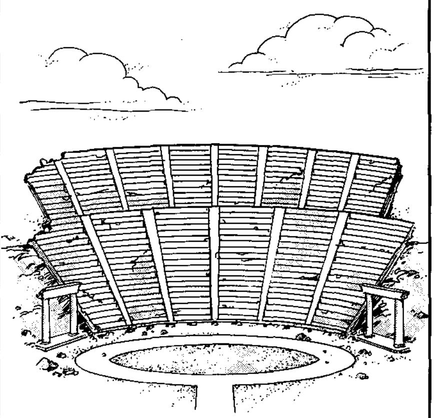
Museum of Modern Art, 11 W. 53rd St.—The Matisse retrospective is organized into seven sections that are at once chronological and thematic. The most powerful section, over all, is the one covering the years 1913 to 1917, which is called "Abstraction and Experimentation." A big, subdued, rigorous Jungian masterpiece called "Bathers by a River" (completed in 1916), for instance, from the Art Institute of Chicago, is the great coup de theatre of this rich but surprisingly unrevealing exhibition. There are, however, some happy rediscoveries, such as a number of Matisse's exercises in bold contours and high style from the early forties—paintings like "The Rumanian Blouse," which may have inspired a collection or two by Saint Laurent, and several still-lifes and interiors with figures against black gridded grounds. Some of the great late cutouts are disappointing. In fact, this exhibition doesn't begin or end with a bang. Through Jan. 19. (Plan wisely; call 708-9850 for ticket information. Tickets can be purchased in advance, and a limited number of same-day tickets are available on a first-come, first-served basis.). . . ¶ Since many of the museum's major works are on reciprocal loan to other museums in exchange for Matisses, the museum has chosen to reinstall a number of its remaining paintings, sculptures, and other objects in a non-chronological fashion. There are several informative passages, such as Picasso's sexually charged "Demoiselles" and de Kooning's fierce "Woman I" displayed next to Louise Bourgeois' defiant, ironically erect "Sleeping Figure." Likewise, there is a welcome mixing of mediums, such as Bellmer's "La Poupée," a book with surrealistic pictures of body parts, displayed beside a realistic Robert Gober leg. Still, many of the juxtapositions are far less revealing than they were presumably intended to be. Through Feb. 21. . . . ¶ "The Artist and the Book in Twentieth-Century Italy." Through Feb. 16. (Museum hours through Jan. 19: open Sundays through Tuesdays, and Fridays and Saturdays, 10:30 to 6; Wednesdays, 12 to 6; Thursdays, 10:30 to 9.)

Guggenheim Museum, Fifth Ave. at 89th St.—Selections from the permanent collection are on view. (Open daily, except Thursdays, 10 to 8.)

Guggenheim Museum SoHo, 575 Broadway—Works that Robert Rauschenberg made between 1949 and 1954, before the appearance of the groundbreaking combines. As a young man working in New York, at North Carolina's Black Mountain College, and in Europe and North Africa, where he travelled for seven months with his friend Cy Twombly, Rauschenberg was already doing almost everything: painting, sculpture, collage, and photography, of course, but also Conceptual art works *avant la lettre* and all sorts of experiments in mediums ranging from newsprint to blueprints. His work has influenced many artists of his own generation (Warhol, Johns) and of the two that have arisen since (Rosenquist; David Salle and Cady Noland). Through Jan. 25. . . . ¶ "Marc Chagall and the Jewish Theatre." Chagall's murals for the State Jewish Chamber Theatre, in Moscow, are in many ways ambitious, but they are not especially satisfying. They are notable for their delicacy, for their mixture of figurative and abstract forms, and for the essentially modest scale of their elements. Through Jan. 17. (Open daily, except Tuesdays, 11 to 6, and Thursday, Friday, and Saturday evenings until 10.)

Whitney Museum of American Art, Madison Ave. at 75th St.—Agnes Martin didn't achieve her mature style until the early sixties, when she was in her late forties. It is the paradox of her career that she has made soft, delicate paintings in a rigid grid format. Within her narrow vocabulary, Martin explores infinite variation. Though each painting is a perfect distillation of her œuvre, the more you see, the more you want to see. Through Jan. 31. . . . ¶ In providing a historical context for the Martin show, "The Geometric Tradition in American Art, 1930-1990" includes work by Ellsworth Kelly, Ad Reinhardt, Donald Judd, and Burgoyne Diller. Through Feb. 14. . . . ¶ A retrospective of paintings by Jean-Michel Basquiat. Through Feb. 14. . . . ¶ "Photography: Expanding a Collection" includes works by Cindy Sherman, Sally Mann, and Ana Mendieta. (Open Wednesdays, and Fridays through Sundays, 11 to 6; Thursdays, 1 to 8.)

QUEEN ELIZABETH 2
MEDITERRANEAN



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CUNARD

N18

ART–Cont'd

Brooklyn Museum, Eastern Parkway—"Frédéric Bazille: Prophet of Impressionism." Bazille (1841-70) lived only long enough to brush up against early Impressionism. He was an exact contemporary of Renoir and Monet, and he worked closely with them when he was a truant medical student in Paris. Bazille's virtuosity as an Impressionist is perhaps most evident in "The Rose Laurels," a small painting of flowering bushes, which, though signed, is obviously unfinished. There are, however, at least three outstanding Bazilles in Brooklyn, and they have in common a theme surprising for that heyday of the female nude: "The Improvised Field Hospital" is a portrait of Monet, as *homme fatal*, in bed after a minor accident, while "Fisherman with a Net" and "Summer Scene (Bathers)" are not only the cool Bazille's most impassioned works but also bracing homoerotic retorts to everyone else's *déjeuners sur l'herbe*. Through Jan. 24. . . . ¶ Sixty sculptures by Auguste Rodin have been reinstalled in the Cantor Gallery. Among the works here are two independent pieces from "The Gates of Hell"; maquettes, studies, and four full-scale figures from "The Burghers of Calais"; and several versions of "Balzac.". . . ¶ "Dame of the Narrows" (1976), a large-scale sculpture of the Staten Island ferry arriving at the Manhattan terminal, by Red Grooms, Mimi Gross, and the Ruckus Construction Company, is on view in the lobby. (Open Wednesdays through Sundays, 10 to 5.)

American Museum of Natural History, Central Park W. at 79th St.—"This Is the American Earth," a show that highlights environmental concerns through landscape photographs by such artists as Ansel Adams, Margaret Bourke-White, Eliot Porter, Jacob Riis, and Minor White. Through Jan. 24. (Open daily, 10 to 5:45, and Friday and Saturday evenings until 8:45.)

Morgan Library, 29 E. 36th St.—A large show of medieval and Renaissance illuminated manuscripts from the Breslauer Collection is on view. . . . ¶ "Printers and Miniaturists" shows off the finest in late-fifteenth-century Venetian illuminated books. . . . ¶ In "Thomas Jefferson: Tranquil Pursuits and Stormy Politics," one can see "Summary View of the Rights of America" (1774), his first published work; the library's copy of the first printing of the Declaration of Independence; personal letters to Elbridge Gerry (later v.p. under Madison); and letters to his daughter Martha. (Open Tuesdays through Saturdays, 10:30 to 5; Sundays, 1 to 5.)

Studio Museum in Harlem, 144 W. 125th St.—"Wifredo Lam and His Contemporaries, 1938-52." More than a hundred paintings by a Cuban modernist of African, Chinese, and Spanish ancestry. Lam was an early multi-culti, the first artist to turn the sometimes condescending primitivism of modern art on its ear. (Open Wednesdays through Fridays, 10 to 5; Saturdays and Sundays, 1 to 6.)

GALLERIES—UPTOWN

(Unless otherwise noted, galleries are open Tuesdays through Saturdays from around 10 or 11 to between 5 and 6.)

Peter Cain—In Cain's paintings, automobiles like the Mercedes 500SL and the Bugatti EP 110 appear as de-luxe mutants. The original showroom images of the cars have been sliced up on the artist's drawing board and reassembled in such a way as to suggest a faintly sinister, if timely, reversal of the process by which limos are "stretched." These disconcerting contractions are then projected onto canvas, rendered in oil (with some taped edges), and set against sleek, painterly grounds. In one outstanding work, the largest in the show, a blue bumper hits the road upside down, in a highway landscape of refracted planes in fruity pinks and peaches. Through Jan. 28. (Marks, 1018 Madison Avenue, at 79th St.)

Damien Hirst—So much hype has surrounded this young British artist that his work is bound to disappoint. This may have something to do with the fact that he is the ringleader of a new generation of London artists who seem to have been created by a market that disappeared before they had time to enjoy it. For his first New York show, he has lined the gallery with pharmacy cases filled with medications for every illness imaginable. In the center, in a limp appropriation of Joseph Beuys, he has placed a large bug-zapper surrounded by bowls of honeycomb as "a primary symbol of social organization." The piece is not without a certain intelligence, but it is so literal and grandiose, and so full of neo-Conceptual pretense, that, sure enough, it disappoints. Through Jan. 28. (Cohen, 1018 Madison Ave., at 79th St. Open Mondays.)

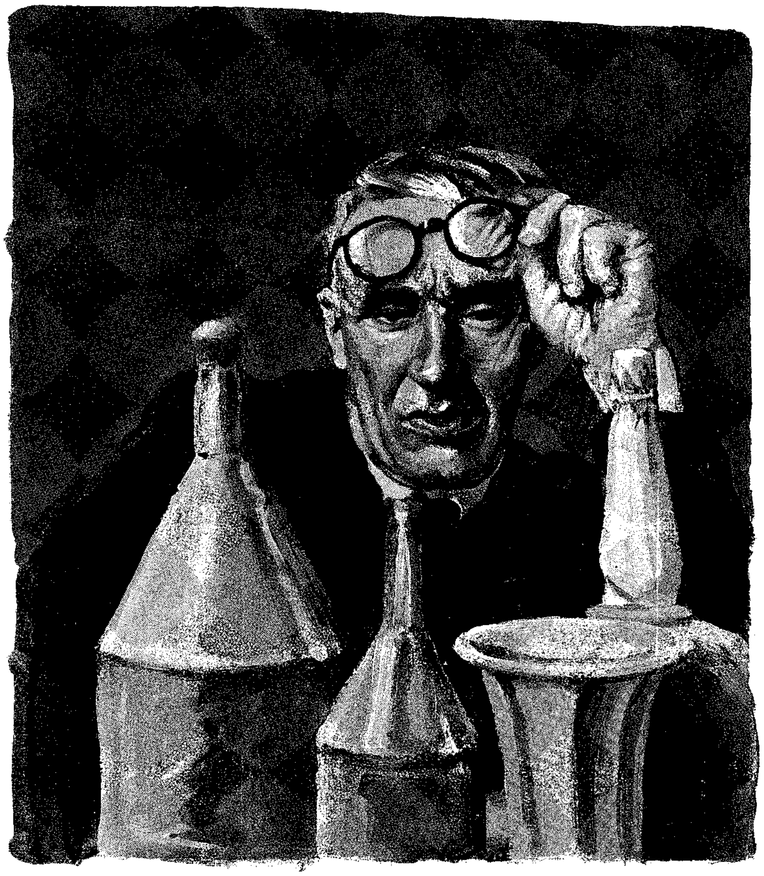
Short List—**hannelore baron,** Schlesinger, 24 E. 73rd St. (through Feb. 27); **pietro tempesta,** Salander-O'Reilly, 20 E. 79th St. (through Jan. 23).

GALLERIES—57th STREET AREA

"Josef Hoffmann: Designs"—This gem of a show owes much of its success to a well-paced installation. The objects are arranged to give a sense of the principle of *Gesamtkunstwerk*, or total art work, which guided the architect/designer, but, thankfully, there is no attempt to turn the show into an extravaganza. Though there are hundreds of objects and drawings in this assembly, it remains true to Hoffmann's light, unerringly elegant touch, his concentration on detail. Chairs are arranged in a line, not chronologically but so as to give a sense of evolution: one from 1898, for example, whose carved back exhibits the organic stylization of the Arts and Crafts movement, is placed beside one from 1934, in which natural form has been transmuted into an Art Deco whiplash. Tableware in silver and brass is displayed to emphasize sublimely delicate edges, whether beaded or sharp, while pieces of glassware all seem to focus on form, from their long lily-pad bases and stems to their thin, pouty lips. There are models of his few important buildings, and the show ends with some marvellous details—fabrics with magically simple patterns and several small, exquisitely gilded tooled-leather pocketbooks. Through Jan. 23. (IBM Gallery of Science and Art, Madison Ave. at 56th St.)

Giorgio Morandi (1890-1964)—This Italian Buddha of existential art brought new meaning to the still-life. His tight arrangements of bowls and bottles, which preoccupied him for virtually his entire artistic life, are always the same yet always different. They somehow exhibit the lessons of Cézanne and the Cubists while seeming to take great pleasure in turning their back on modernist conventions. Several excellent still-lifes are on display, as well as a fascinating painting of a courtyard; it is as reassuringly static as the other works, but also alive with light. Through Jan. 30. (Baldacci-Daverio, 41 E. 57th St.)

Short List—**richard baker,** Washburn, 20 W. 57th St. (through Jan. 16); **stuart davis,** Ulysses, 41 E. 57th St. (through Jan. 23); **nobu fukui,** Marisa del Re, 41 E. 57th St. (through Feb. 6); **david hockney** and **hans hofmann,** Emmerich, 41 E. 57th St. (through Feb. 13); **lee krasner,** Robert Miller, 41 E. 57th St. (through Jan. 30); **leonid lerman,** McKee, 745 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. (through Feb. 3); **melissa meyer** and **tristano di robilant,** Holly Solomon, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. (through Feb. 13); **zoran music,** Krugier, 41 E. 57th St. (through Jan. 30); **fairfield porter,** De Nagy, 41 W. 57th St. (through Jan. 23); **max weber,** Forum, 745 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. (through Jan. 23); **lawrence weiner,** Marian Goodman, 24 W. 57th St. (through Feb. 13); **neil welliver,** Marlborough, 40 W. 57th St. (through Jan. 30); **sandy winters** (through Jan. 30) and **maryan** (through Feb. 27), Frumkin-Adams, 50 W. 57th St.



ALICIA CZECHOWSKI

Giorgio Morandi at the Baldacci-Daverio gallery

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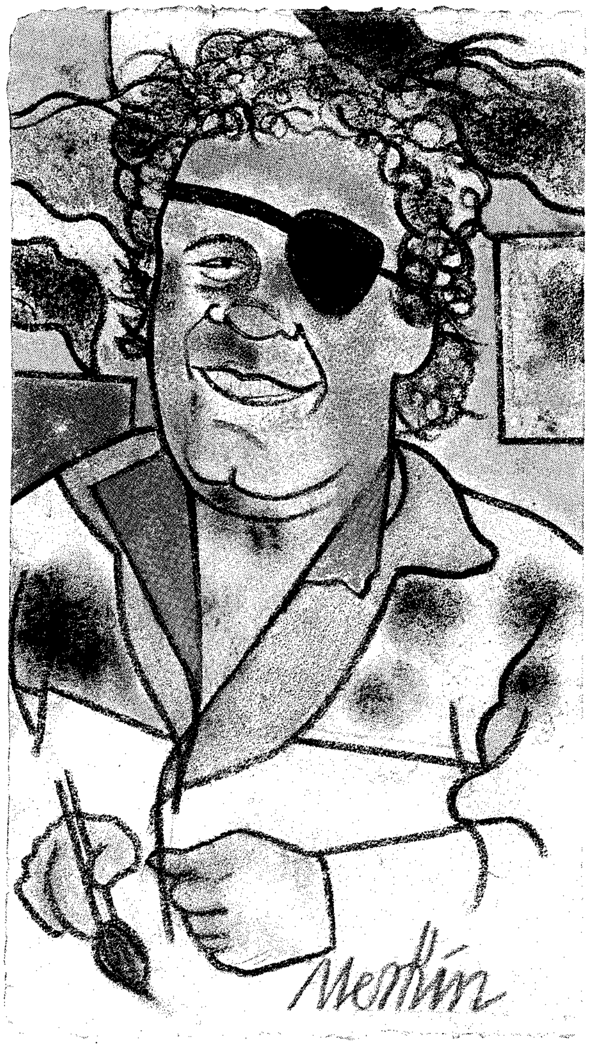
COLUMBIA HOUSE

GALLERIES—SoHo

Dale Chihuly—Large glass blossoms—like birds of paradise—placed in enormous decorated glass vases. Through Jan. 23. (Cowles, 420 West Broadway.)

Odd Nerdrum—Pretentious, ponderous, operatic works so thickly encrusted toward the bottom it's as if the weight of all that schmalz had caused a landslide on the canvas. These are clearly tongue-in-cheek works, with their flabby, deformed, and deranged heroes, but irony is little recompense for the plodding manpower that so obviously went into their making. Through Jan. 16. (Thorp, 103 Prince St.)

Gerhard Richter—Two small canvases, and a goodly sampling of works on paper from the past several years. The abstract watercolors are quite beautiful, but especially engaging are some small pencil drawings that map out the anatomy of the artist's large abstract paintings. There is also a group of mysterious black-and-white photographic works comprising murky multiple exposures of the artist in his studio. They were made at the same time as his out-of-focus grisaille paintings of the alleged suicide of the leaders of the Baader-Meinhof gang. Through Jan. 30. (Nolan-Eckman, 560 Broadway.)



Dale Chihuly at the Cowles gallery

RICHARD MERKIN

Andy Warhol (1930-87)—A fascinating show of an essentially unknown body of work. Made shortly before he died, these paintings illustrate the two sides of Warhol: the detached, cool materialist, and the less frequently glimpsed visionary. They also show the influence of the artist's collaboration with Jean-Michel Basquiat—not just in their style (the anatomical chartings, the writing, even the very orthography) but in their youthful vigor and self-obsession. Through Jan. 30. (Gagosian, 136 Wooster St.)

"Fever"—The nonprofit exhibition center Exit Art featured multicultural programs long before they became fashionable, and it is just beginning to reap the rewards of its prescience. At a time when many galleries are closing and nonprofits are trying to figure out how to make it in the nineties, Exit Art is ushering in the Clinton era by tripling its space and renaming itself Exit Art/The First World. The moment is being celebrated with a big group show of forty-eight young artists, with totems, altars, prison cells, and healing stations—a gently chaotic installation. The late-seventies spirit of Colab is everywhere, although this show is more racially and sexually integrated. It is probably a disservice with this sort of exhibition to try to single out individual artists; over all, it is an earnest, spirited affair in a space that has a terrific energy, of a sort that has been absent from most big SoHo group shows of recent years. The new Exit Art also offers a café and a shopful of artist-designed housewares, consisting mostly of overpriced, unimaginative junk (although Komar & Melamid's Lenin candlesticks, Ursula von Rydingsvard's table, and Gilda Pervin's bathroom scale of medicine-cabinet contents are exceptions). The future promises a second exhibition space, a fashion hall, and a theatre. Through Jan. 30. (548 Broadway.)

"La Tinaia" / "Hands of Time"—Recent art by the patients of San Salvi, a psychiatric hospital in Florence, Italy. (La Tinaia—"the vat-room"—is the name of the hospital's center for expressive activity, chosen because the group's studio is an old wine-making house.) There's a full range of styles here, from the intense color juxtapositions of the expressionist to the single-mindedness of someone who draws the same object over and over until the paper is full. / A different kind of obsessiveness is visible downstairs, where work made by men in various American prisons is on view. Most of the drawing is fascinating, if amateurish. The subject matter is rather limited: tattoos, skulls, devils, barred windows, executions. The work of a lifer like Daniel (Stretch) Watson is especially disturbing, whether in his drawings of semis buried in canyons or in his demonically glaring self-portraits. There are objects made out of the few raw materials at hand: toilet paper, soap, and small rocks (some carved with the intricacy of netsuke); and there are also bags and crucifixes and photo albums made from old cigarette packs—these guys can do a lot with a Camel wrapper. Through Jan. 23. (Kind, 136 Greene St.)

Short List—**JENNIFER BARTLETT,** Cooper, 149 Wooster St. (through Jan. 16); **JAMES BIEDERMAN** and **SUSAN LEOPOLD,** Weber, 142 Greene St. (through Feb. 6); **PIER CONSAGRA,** Toll, 146 Greene St. (through Feb. 6); **KEITH HARING,** Shafrazi, 130 Prince St. (through Jan. 16); **JASPER JOHNS,** Castelli, 420 West Broadway (through Feb. 5); **WOLFGANG LAIB,** Sperone Westwater, 121 Greene St. (through Feb. 27); **FRANK MOORE,** Sperone Westwater, 142 Greene St. (through Feb. 6); **DAVID MORIARTY** and **KATHERINE BRADFORD,** Beitzel, 102 Prince St. (through Feb. 6); **PANAMARENKO,** Feldman, 31 Mercer St. (through Feb. 13); **CHARLES SEARLES,** Kelly, 591 Broadway (through Feb. 2); **HELEN SOREFF,** M-13, at 72 Greene St. (through Jan. 30); **BETTY WOODMAN,** Protetch, 560 Broadway (through Feb. 13); **MICHAEL ZWACK,** Marcus, 578 Broadway (through Jan. 30).

PHOTOGRAPHY

Revealing Shots

If you don't know the fashion imagery of Lillian Bassman—and not many people do anymore—it's worth going into the Howard Greenberg gallery, which has given this experiment-minded photographer and art director a large exhibition, featuring both old and new work (120 Wooster Street; through January 16). The influence of Alexey Brodovitch—for whom Bassman worked, at *Harper's Bazaar*, from the late thirties until the sixties—is obvious in her pictures, many of which appeared in that magazine. Bassman's mixture of glamour, graphic contrast, and expressionistic spontaneity certainly create a look of style. Scrutinized image by image, however, or subject by subject, the work has less to say.

Not so with the smaller show at Greenberg—one dedicated to another *Harper's Bazaar* star, Martin Munkacsi. Munkacsi could take a photograph of anything and make it unforgettable. He has a shot of a white Persian that the collector Sam Wagstaff used to call "the Greta Garbo of cat pictures." Although this particular photograph is not in the show, each and every Munkacsi that is on view is just as sharply defined.

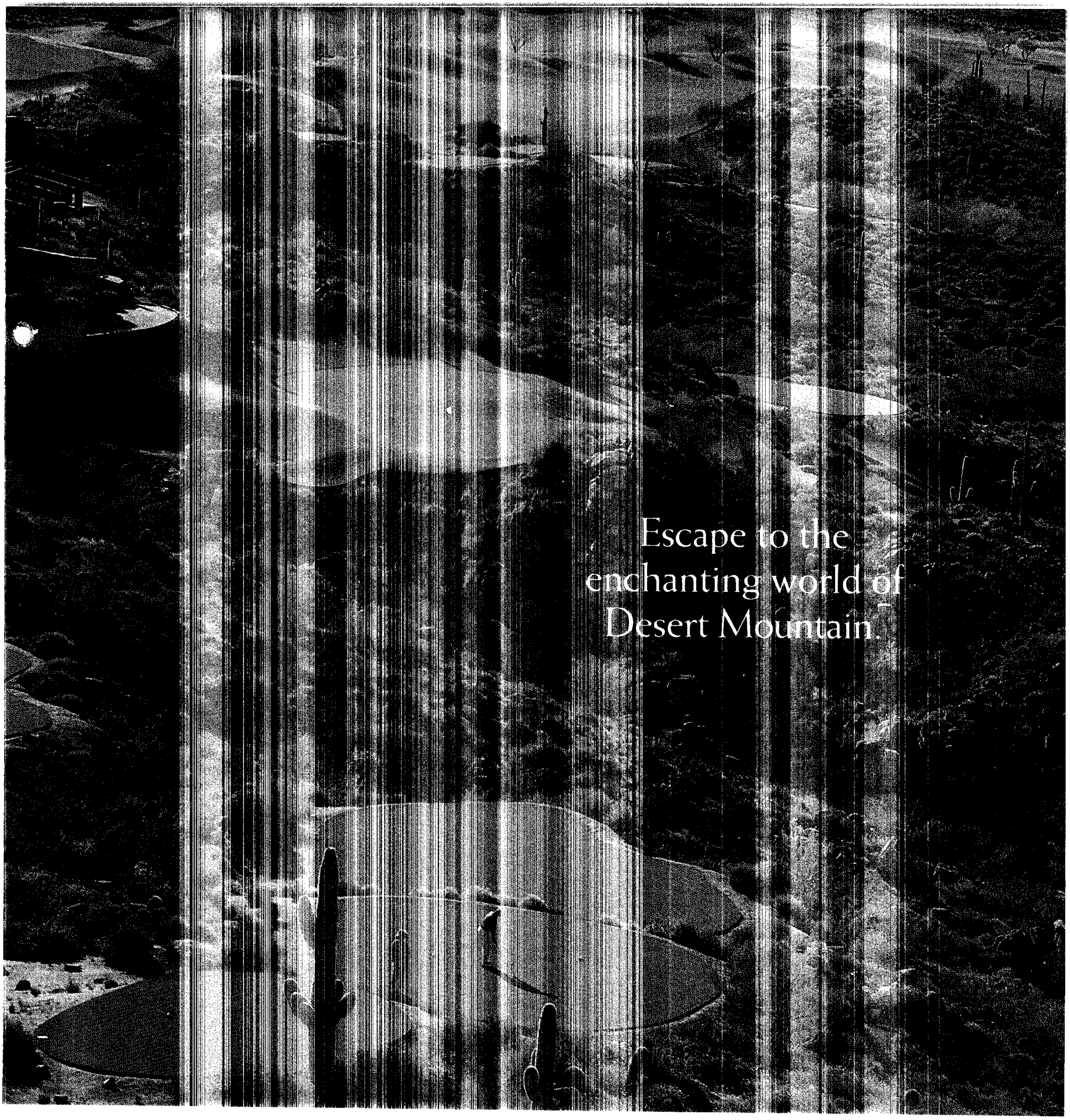
And there's more. At Greenberg's satellite space, the cozy Gallery 292 (just down the hall), there's a partly tongue-in-cheek exhibition called "The Naughty Nude" (also through January 16), whose images span more than a century and depict only women—not all of them, though, in a state faithful to the show's title. Why only women? "There are many fewer photographs of male nudes," Sarah Morthland, who runs the gallery, says. "And they really got snapped up into private collections." Hmm.

Gustave Le Gray (1820-82) / **Robert Adams**—Two groups of seascapes, taken about a hundred and forty years apart, that are breathtaking, both for their drama and for their technical beauty. Through Jan. 30. (Lowinsky, 575 Broadway.)

Weegee (1899-1968)—He still gets around. This show's title, "Portrait of a City," is taken from Weegee's own category for images he felt typified New York, and all of the works are from his personal collection. Through Jan. 16. (Borden, 560 Broadway.)

"Photographs from the 19th Century"—A good mix of works by some of the big names of the period, such as Félix Teynard, Julia Margaret Cameron, Carleton Watkins, and Adam Clark Vroman, and by photographers who have not yet been canonized. Through Jan. 23. (Danziger, 415 West Broadway.)

Short List—**BERND AND HILLA BECHER,** Sonnabend, 420 West Broadway (through Jan. 30); **JOSEF BREITENBACH,** Houk Friedman, 1094 Madison Ave., at 82nd St. (through Feb. 27); **CRAIGIE HORSFIELD,** Gladstone, 99 Greene St. (through Feb. 6); **HIROJI KUBOTA,** International Center of Photography, 1130 Fifth Ave., at 94th St. (open daily, except Mondays, 11 to 6, and Tuesday evenings until 8; through Jan. 31); **DAVID SEIDNER,** Robert Miller, 41 E. 57th St. (through Jan. 30); **TOSHIO SHIBATA,** Laurence Miller, 138 Spring St. (through Feb. 12); **RODNEY SMITH,** Witkin, 415 West Broadway (through Jan. 16); **MAUD SULTER,** Steinbaum Krauss, 132 Greene St. (through Feb. 13).



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MUSIC

The Maestro's "Meistersinger"

THE most memorable theme of James Levine's first decade of leadership at the Metropolitan Opera was the assimilation of twentieth-century classics into the repertoire. The theme of his second decade appears to be the perfection of a Wagner cycle. With staging by Otto Schenk and scenery by Günther Schneider-Siemssen, "Parsifal" and the four operas of the "Ring" have been given new productions over the last seven seasons; this week, "Die Meistersinger" is to be added. (Among the earlier Wagner works seen at the Met, "Tannhäuser" was a pilot project for this team, while "Dutchman" was done by others.)

A clear pattern has emerged: effective pictorial scenery that stops short of arresting beauty; a determined investment in the nurturing of singers (which has borne some fruit but has stopped far short of remembered Wagnerian glories); and luminous, secure, detailed, thrilling playing from Mr. Levine's orchestra. Though there has been a disappointing lack of dramatic focus and intellectual rigor in the stage direction, the theatrical side has not been all weakness: individual performances of great distinction have emerged. Realistically acknowledging possible limitations, one can nevertheless look forward to a rich experience of "Meistersinger." And, beyond it, to the necessary completion of the circle: "Tristan," though currently uncastable, will eventually have to return to the house.

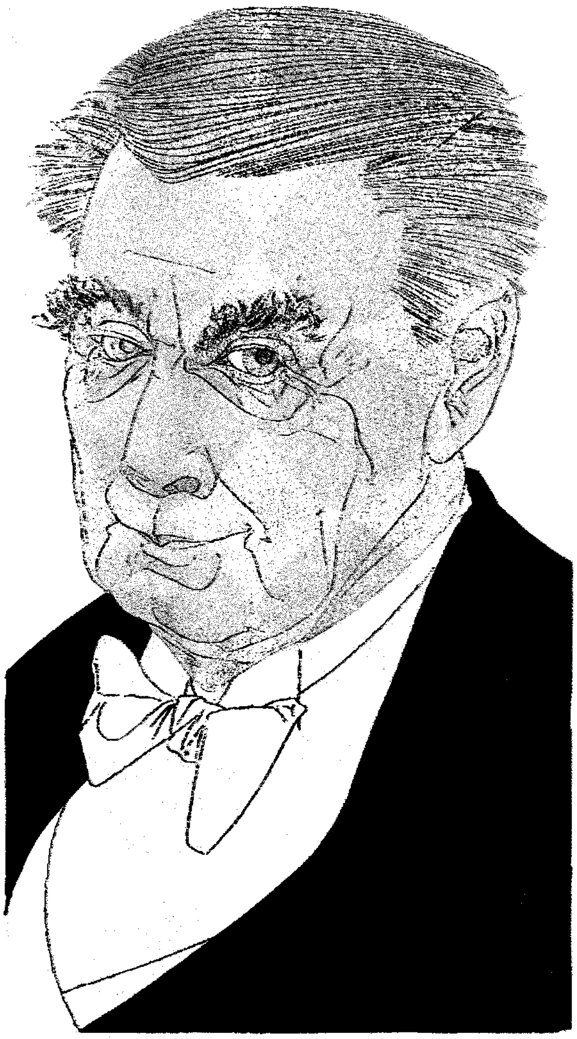
(The box-office number for the Metropolitan Opera House is 362-6000; for Avery Fisher Hall, 875-5030; for Carnegie Hall, 247-7800; for Merkin Concert Hall, 129 W. 67th St., 362-8719; and for the Miller Theatre, Columbia University, Broadway at 116th St., 854-7799.)

OPERA

METROPOLITAN OPERA—**SEMIRAMIDE,** with Lella Cuberli, Gloria Scalchi, Stanford Olsen, and Simone Alaimo; conducted by Ion Marin. (Jan. 13 at 7:30 and Jan. 16 at 1:30.)... **DIE MEISTERSINGER,** in a new production, with Karita Mattila, Francisco Araiza, Lars Magnusson, Donald McIntyre, Hermann Prey, and Jan-Hendrik Rootering; James Levine. (Jan. 14 and Jan. 18 at 6.)... **LA BOHÈME,** with Leona Mitchell, Diana Soviero, Franco Farina, and Christopher Robertson; John Fiore. (Jan. 15 at 8.)... **DIE ZAUBERFLÖTE,** with Dawn Upshaw, Sally Wolf, Frank Lopardo, Gottfried Hornik, and Jan-Hendrik Rootering; Donald Runnicles. (Jan. 16 at 8:30 and Jan. 19 at 8.) (Metropolitan Opera House.)

"SEMELE"—The final performance of an acerbic comic opera from the Restoration, with music by John Eccles to a libretto by William Congreve. Staged by Paul Echols, with Dongsok Shin conducting the Mannes Camerata. (Merkin Concert Hall. Jan. 13 at 8.)

BRONX OPERA COMPANY—Presenting Smetana's "The Bartered Bride," fully staged and in English. (John Jay College Theatre, 899 Tenth Ave., at 58th St. Jan. 15-16 at 8. For information about tickets, call 408-1661.)



Robert Shaw at Carnegie Hall

DAVID JOHNSON

ORCHESTRAS AND CHORUSES

NEW YORK PHILHARMONIC—Kurt Masur conducts two works born out of political repression: Bright Sheng's "H'un (Lacerations): In Memoriam 1966-1976," a musical memoir of China's Cultural Revolution; and Shostakovich's Symphony No. 13 ("Babi Yar"), featuring baritone Sergei Leiferkus and the New York Choral Artists, and with Yevgeny Yevtushenko reading from the poetry that inspired the Russian symphonist's work. (Avery Fisher Hall. Jan. 14 and Jan. 16 at 8, Jan. 15 at 2, and Jan. 19 at 7:30.)

ROBERT SHAW DIRECTS BERLIOZ—The public culmination of conductor Robert Shaw's week-long professional-training institute on Berlioz's extravagant Requiem; with tenor Karl Dent, the Robert Shaw Festival Chorus, the Robert Shaw Institute Singers of the Ohio State University, and the Orchestra of St. Luke's. (Carnegie Hall. Jan. 17 at 3.)

RIVERSIDE SYMPHONY—George Rothman conducts Mendelssohn's "Italian" Symphony, J. C. Bach's D-Major Sinfonia (Op. 3, No. 1), and the première of David Rakowski's Symphony No. 1 (said to be in a post-Mahlerian style, and here featuring soprano Susan Narucki). (Miller Theatre. Jan. 17 at 3. For information about free tickets, which are required, call 864-4197.)

MANNES ORCHESTRA—Kurt Masur conducts the conservatory orchestra in a program celebrating Martin Luther King, Jr., Day: Bach's Third Orchestral Suite, Duke Ellington's "Les Trois Rois Noirs," and Mendelssohn's "Reformation" Symphony. (Riverside Church, Riverside Dr. at 120th St. Jan. 18 at 8. No tickets necessary.)

PHILADELPHIA ORCHESTRA—Christoph Eschenbach conducts Tobias Picker's "Old and Lost Rivers," Tchaikovsky's Symphony No. 6, and Shostakovich's Violin Concerto No. 1 (with Nadja Salerno-Sonnenberg). (Carnegie Hall. Jan. 19 at 8.)

CLARION CONCERTS—Newell Jenkins conducts works by Heinrich Biber, Johann Caspar Ferdinand Fischer, Georg Muffat, and Francesco Maria Veracini; also featuring violinist Louise Schulman in a concerto by Charles Avison, based on a pair of Scarlatti sonatas (K. 9-10) which will be played by harpsichordist Gerald Ranck. (Merkin Concert Hall. Jan. 19 at 8.)

RECITALS

VAN CLIBURN COMPETITION—Competitions: love 'em or hate 'em, they play an enormously important role in promoting the careers of young artists. In the high-stakes piano world, none is more influential than the Van Cliburn International Piano Competition, held every four years in Fort Worth, Texas. Preliminary screening is already under way for this spring's competition, and, over the course of a week, nearly forty pianists will play fifty-minute programs in New York, each hoping to secure a place among the thirty-five eventual competitors. (Similar screenings are going on in nine other cities around the world.) Members of the audience can be assured of hearing some impressive piano-playing—and, come summer, they may be able to say of the next big winner, "I heard that pianist back when...." (Borden Auditorium, Manhattan School of Music, Broadway at 122nd St. Jan. 13 from 7 to 10, and Jan. 14-17 from 1 to 5 and from 7 to 10. No tickets necessary.)

APRILE MILLO—The soprano sings arias by Boito, Catalani, and Wagner, as well as the last's "Wesendonck Lieder"; also an excerpt from the rarely performed sacred opera "Cecilia," written in 1922-23 by the Vatican-affiliated monsignor-composer Licinio Refice and championed by soprano Claudia Muzio from its première, in 1934. The Orchestra of St. Luke's will provide the backup, though a conductor had not been definitively hired even a week before the event. Whoever ends up wielding the baton will be the third conductor to have been announced for this particular concert. Maybe his or her predecessors retreated after stumbling across the disheartening information that Refice dropped dead on the podium (in Rio de Janeiro, in 1954) while conducting this very work. Maybe not. (Avery Fisher Hall. Jan. 13 at 8.)

BARGEMUSIC—Presenting both of Brahms' string sextets; with violinists Ik-Hwan Bae and Mark Peskanov, violists Paul Neubauer and Toby Hoffman, and cellists Fred Sherry and Ronald Thomas. (Fulton Ferry Landing, Brooklyn. 1-718 624-4061. Jan. 14 at 7:30 and Jan. 17 at 4.)

FREDERICA VON STADE—The mezzo-soprano performs songs and arias by ten composers, including a group in the cabaret mode by Satie, Poulenc, and Schoenberg; with pianist Martin Katz. (Carnegie Hall. Jan. 14 at 8.)

TOKYO STRING QUARTET—In the first of two programs that will traverse the six quartets of Bartók. This installment will comprise Quartets No. 1, No. 3, and No. 5. (Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 83rd St. 570-3949. Jan. 15 at 8.)

CURTIS MACOMBER—The violinist performs works by John Harbison, Jean Eichelberger Ivey, Stephen Paulus, and Roger Sessions, in addition to a sonata of relative antiquity by Amy Cheney Beach (or "Mrs. H. H. A.," as they used to say); with help from cellist Joel Krosnick, pianist Diane Walsh, and a tape recorder. (Miller Theatre. Jan. 15 at 8.)

ANDRÉ EMELIANOFF—For years, Mr. Emelianoff was forever popping up as principal cellist of this or that free-lance or occasional orchestra around town. These days, he's settled in at the first-cello desk of the New York Chamber Symphony and as a member of the Aeolian and the Da Capo Chamber Players. In a comparatively rare solo appearance, he performs sonatas by Brahms (his First) and Debussy, Schumann's "Five Pieces in Folk Style," and Bruce Adolphe's "Lyric Piece No. 3"—all with pianist Susan Walters—as well as a "Duetto" by Rossini, for cello and double bass (with the assistance of Timothy Cobb). (Paul Hall, Juilliard School, 60 Lincoln Center Plaza. Jan. 16 at 6. No tickets necessary.)

Carter Brey and Christopher O'Riley—The cellist and the pianist include in their program sonatas by Barber, Prokofiev, and Brahms (his Second). (Washington Irving High School, Irving Pl. at 16th St. Jan. 16 at 8. For information about tickets, call 586-4680.)

Christian Tetzlaff—Performing unaccompanied violin sonatas by Bach, Ysaÿe, and Bartók. (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 415-5440. Jan. 16 at 8.)

Ricardo Iznaola—The Cuban-born classical guitarist performs his own "Ten Concert Etudes," the "Suite Venezolana" by Antonio Lauro, a sonata by Ginastera, and other works. (Merkin Concert Hall. Jan. 16 at 8.)

Octeto Académico de Caracas—Performing chamber works by Hummel and Mozart, arrangements from Brahms and Dvořák, and (with the assistance of Grant Johannesen) Beethoven's Quintet for Piano and Winds (Op. 16). (Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 83rd St. 570-3949. Jan. 16 at 8.)

Olaf Bär—The baritone sings lieder by Mendelssohn, Schumann (his "Dichterliebe"), Brahms, and Strauss; with pianist Craig Rutenberg. (Alice Tully Hall. Jan. 17 at 3.)

Emerson String Quartet—Performing quartets by Sibelius (in D Major, subtitled "Intimate Voices"), Berg, and Schubert (the "Death and the Maiden"). (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 415-5440. Jan. 17 at 3.)

New York Philharmonic Ensembles—Members of the orchestra present Beethoven's String Quintet (Op. 29), Webern's "Five Pieces for String Quartet" (Op. 5), a Divertimento by Adolphus Busch, and Dohnányi's Sextet. (Merkin Concert Hall. Jan. 17 at 3.)

Odyssey Chamber Players—Though Bernard Herrmann is best remembered for his gripping film scores, especially those for Hitchcock, he also produced a fairly substantial catalogue of concert works, including, in 1967, his "Souvenirs de Voyage" for clarinet and string quartet. The Odyssey group performs it here, along with Brahms' Piano Quintet and flute-based curiosities by Jean-Louis Tulou and Arthur Foote. (Madison Avenue Presbyterian Church, Madison Ave. at 73rd St. Jan. 17 at 3. Tickets at the door on the afternoon of the concert.)

North/South Consonance—Presenting works from all over, by Carlos Chávez, Alain Feron, Bernard Rands, Randall Snyder, and Tapio Tuomela; with mezzo-soprano Katherine Ciesinski. (Christ and St. Stephen's Church, 120 W. 69th St. Jan. 17 at 3. Tickets at the door on the afternoon of the concert.)

Baltimore Consort—Renaissance-music recitals used to be such innocent affairs. Enter the Baltimore Consort, whose latest recording (on the Dorian label), "The Art of the Bawdy Song," is the first "classical" recording to carry a parental-advisory sticker because of its explicit English lyrics. You needn't worry about taking the youngsters to this concert, though, unless they're well-schooled in Rabelaisian French; it's a preview of their upcoming French Renaissance CD. If graphic images offend you, you can always sit back and pretend these once popular tunes, by Jean Mouton, Eustache du Caurroy, and others, really *are* about nymphs and shepherdesses, and nothing but (which, in some cases, may actually be true). In any event, you can always cool off during the instrumental numbers, when soprano Custer LaRue isn't singing. Presented (in a church, no less!) by Music Before 1800. (Corpus Christi Church, 529 W. 121st St. 666-0675. Jan. 17 at 4.)

Cyndia Sieden—The soprano sings Italian art songs by Donizetti, Mascagni, Puccini, and Arturo Toscanini, among others; with pianist Michael Barrett. (Greenwich House Music School, 46 Barrow St. 242-4770. Jan. 17 at 5.)

Sylvan Winds—Members of the ensemble play Hindemith's "Kleine Kammermusik"; Claude Frank joins them for Mozart's Piano Quintet (K. 452) and Ludwig Thuille's Sextet. (Weill Recital Hall, at Carnegie Hall. Jan. 18 at 8.)

Juilliard String Quartet—Benita Valente's soprano was the voice both John Harbison and Alberto Ginastera had in mind when writing their works for voice and string quartet. Ms. Valente will be on hand to participate in Ginastera's String Quartet No. 3 and the New York première of Harbison's "The Rewaking" (based on poetry by William Carlos Williams). The Juilliard foursome will also play Berg's "Lyric Suite." (Miller Theatre. Jan. 19 at 8.)

Kenneth Hamrick—The organist performs Bach's "Canonic Variations on 'Von Himmel hoch'" and Reger's "Fantasia and Fugue on 'Wie schön leucht't uns der Morgenstern,'" in addition to works by Vierne, Tournemire, and Dupré. (Church of St. Mary the Virgin, 145 W. 46th St. 921-2939. Jan. 19 at 8.)

JAZZ/POP/ROCK
PERSONAL APPEARANCES

The B-52's—The wild and cheesy band that combines camp grandeur and silliness offers a hot-pants concert guaranteed to jolt you out of that dead-of-winter torpor. Last summer's "Good Stuff" was not quite up to the standard set by their glorious 1989 comeback album, "Cosmic Thing," but it did provide several new crowd-pleasing songs that can take their place alongside deranged favorites like "Rock Lobster" and "Private Idaho." The rock singer Juliana Hatfield, formerly of Boston's Blake Babies and an honorary member of the sublime Lemonheads, will open this happy evening. (Radio City Music Hall, Sixth Ave. at 50th St. 247-4777. Jan. 14-15 at 8.)

"Music and Dance of Morocco"—Hassan Hakmoun, Said Hakmoun, and Radouane Laktibi. (Washington Square Church, 135 W. 4th St. Jan. 15 at 8. For information about tickets, call 545-7536.)

Israel (Cachao) Lopez—Radio City Music Hall. Jan. 16 at 8.

Don Shirley Trio—Carnegie Hall. 247-7800. Jan. 17 at 8.

Throat-Singers of Tuva—A trio from Tuva, in Central Asia. (Washington Square Church. Jan. 16 at 8. . . . ¶ Uris Auditorium, Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 81st St. Jan. 17 at 2:30. For information about tickets to both concerts, call 545-7536.)

"Gruppen"—A new-music series. Jan. 14-15: La Monte Young & the Forever Bad Blues Band. . . . ¶ Jan. 16: Mikel Rouse's Broken Consort, the Michael Gordon Philharmonic, and Virgil Moorefield. (The Kitchen, 512 W. 19th St. 255-5793. Concerts at 8:30.)

SPORTS

HOME TEAMS

Knicks—Vs. the Phoenix Suns, Jan. 18 at 1.

Nets—Vs. the Cleveland Cavaliers, Jan. 13. . . . ¶ Vs. the Philadelphia 76ers, Jan. 15. . . . ¶ Vs. the Indiana Pacers, Jan. 18. (Game time, 7:30.)

Rangers—Vs. the Washington Capitals, Jan. 13 at 7:30.

Islanders—Vs. the Washington Capitals, Jan. 14. . . . ¶ Vs. the Boston Bruins, Jan. 19. (Game time, 7:35.)

Devils—Vs. the Los Angeles Kings, Jan. 14. . . . ¶ Vs. the Islanders, Jan. 16. (Game time, 7:35.)

(The Knicks and the Rangers play at Madison Square Garden, 465-6000; the Islanders at the Nassau Coliseum, 1-516 794-9300; and the Nets and the Devils at the Meadowlands Arena, 1-201 935-3900.)

RACING

Horses—At Aqueduct: Daily, except Tuesdays, at 12:30. . . . TROTTING at Yonkers Raceway: Mondays through Saturdays at 8 and Tuesdays at 1; Sundays at 6:45. . . . At the Meadowlands: Weeknights at 7:30.

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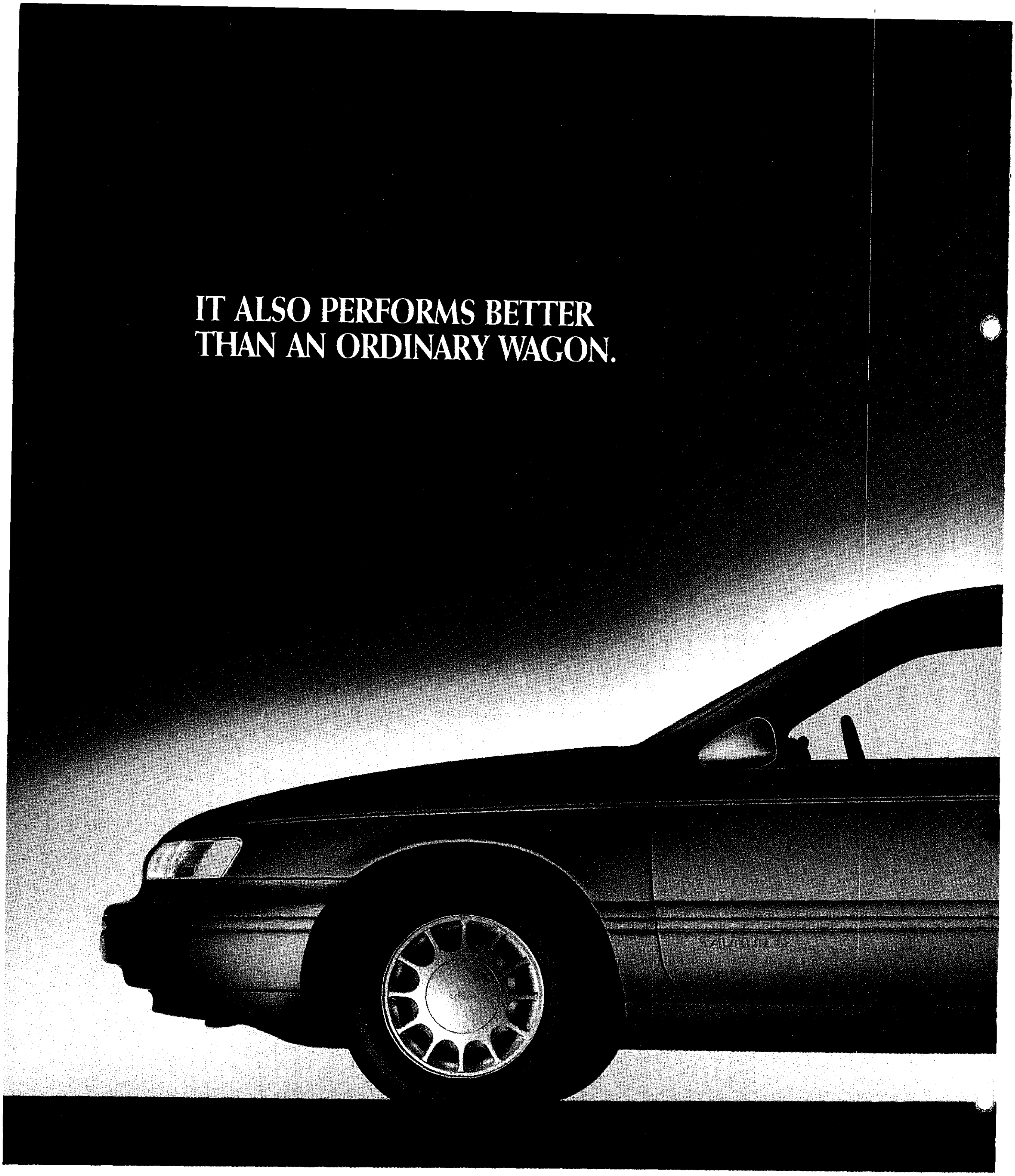
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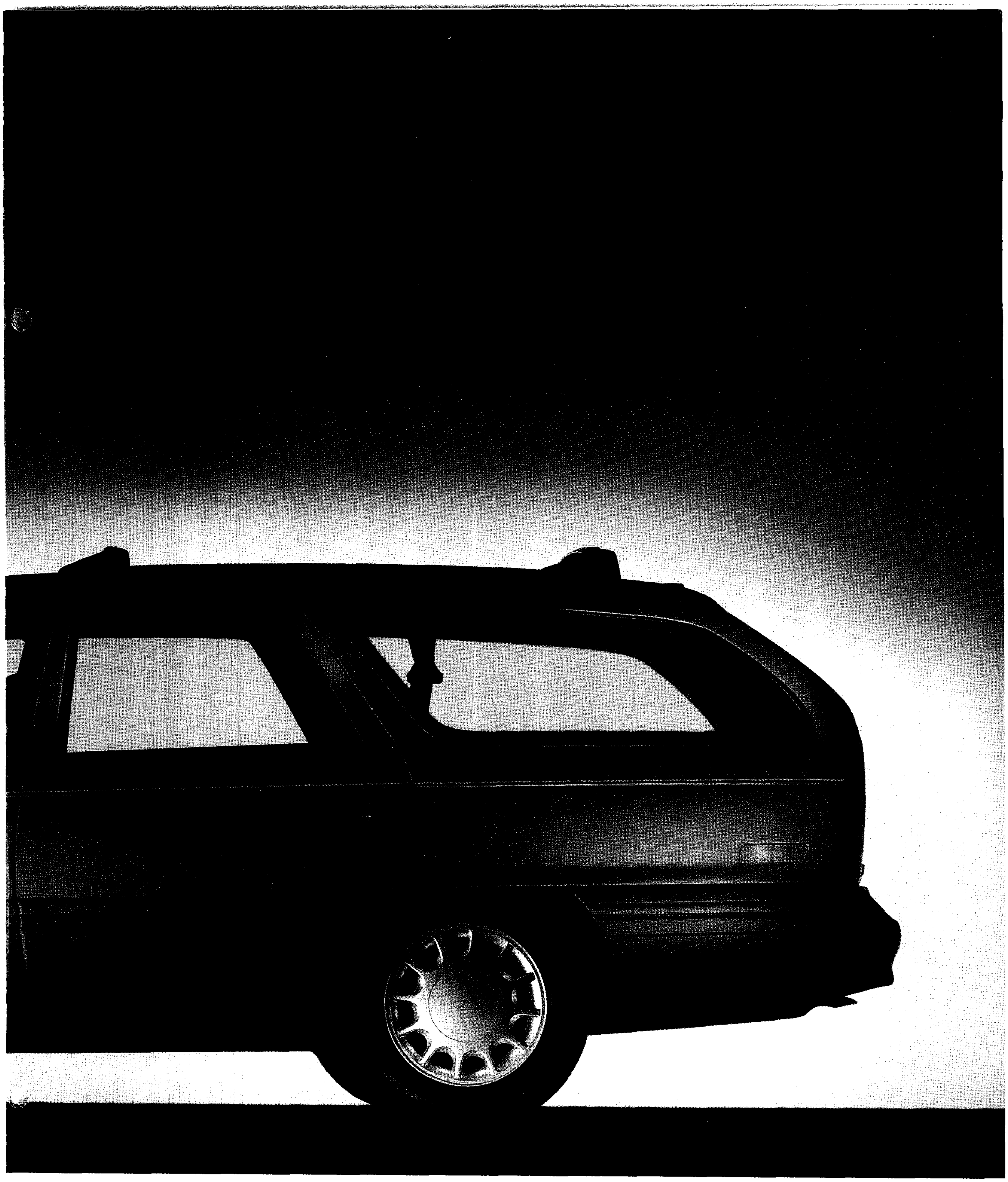

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ABOVE AND BEYOND

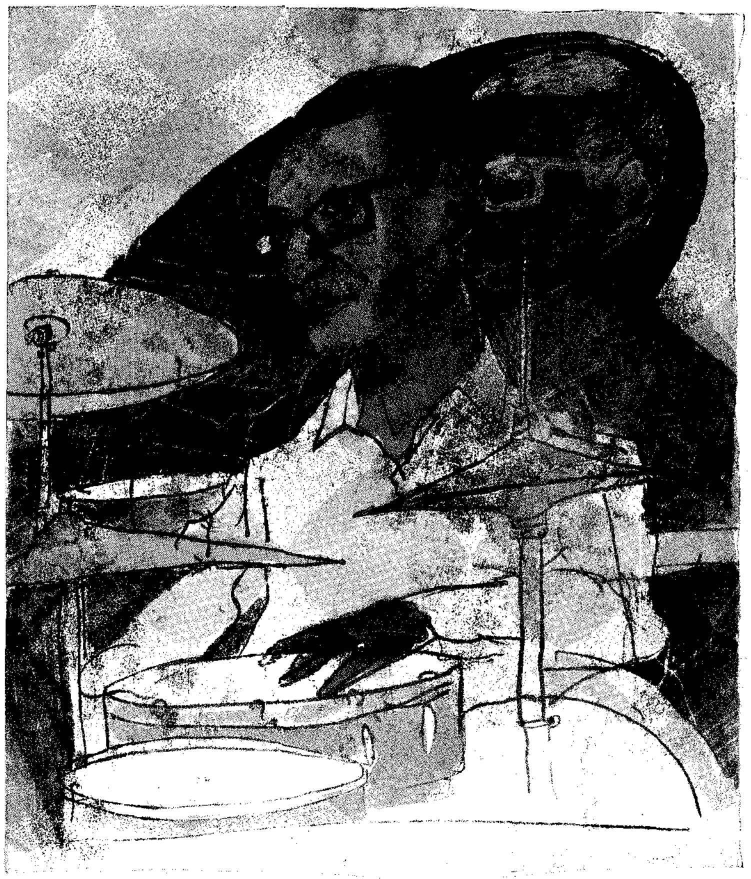
Martin Luther King, Jr., Birthday Tribute—In "King, Poetry, and Jazz," drummer Max Roach will accompany a tape of King delivering his "I Have a Dream" speech, followed by seven poet-musician duos. Poets include William Matthews, Yusef Komunyakaa, and Marilyn Nelson Waniek; among the musicians are Tommy Flanagan, Julius Hemphill, and Geri Allen. (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. Jan. 18 at 8. Tickets at the door on the night of the tribute.)

Red Square—Vanessa Redgrave, Kika Markham, Corin Redgrave, and Mikhail Shatrov will present an evening of Russian poetry, from Pushkin to Pasternak, in a benefit performance. (Circle in the Square, 50th St. west of Broadway. Jan. 18 at 8. For tickets, call 279-4200.)

Readings—Jan. 13 at 9: Glenn O'Brien will read from his poetry, with Robert Arron accompanying him on the clarinet, flute, and saxophone. (Fez, at Time Café, 380 Lafayette St. Tickets at the door on the night of the reading.). . . ¶ Jan. 14 at 8: Canaan Parker will read from his novel "The Color of Trees." (A Different Light, 548 Hudson St. No tickets necessary.). . . ¶ Jan. 14 at 8: Science-fiction writers Paul Di Filippo, Neil Gaiman, and Jack Womack will read from their own work. (Dixon Place, 258 Bowery, near Houston St. Tickets at the door on the night of the reading.)

Talks—Jan. 13 at 6: Yehuda Bauer will speak about the impact of the Holocaust on both Jews and non-Jews. (New York Public Library, Fifth Ave. at 42nd St. 930-0571.). . . ¶ Jan. 13 at 6: Schuyler Chapin and Joseph Horowitz, among other panelists, will discuss the legacies of Toscanini and Bernstein. (Museum of Television & Radio, 25 W. 52nd St. 621-6600.). . . ¶ Jan. 14 at 6: A panel of directors will discuss how automobile commercials are made. (Museum of Television & Radio, 25 W. 52nd St. 621-6600.). . . ¶ Jan. 14 at 8: Stephen Jay Gould will give a talk titled "Pattern and Predictability in the History of Life." (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. Tickets at the door on the night of the talk.). . . ¶ Jan. 16 from noon to 5: The Wagner Society of New York's thirteenth annual seminar will focus on "Die Meistersinger." Speakers will include Dale Harris and Robert Bailey, as well as singers Hermann Prey and Francisco Araiza. (Robert F. Wagner Junior High School Auditorium, 220 E. 76th St. For reservations, call 749-4561.). . . ¶ Jan. 16 at 2: Edward P. Jones, whose short-story collection "Lost in the City" was a National Book Award finalist, will talk about writing. (96th Street Regional Library, 112 E. 96th St. No tickets necessary.). . . ¶ Jan. 17 at 7:30: John McLaughlin will discuss his television shows. (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. Tickets at the door on the night of the talk.). . . ¶ Jan. 19 at 5:30: Michael Smith, director of the Lincoln Hospital Medical Center's acupuncture clinic, will talk about AIDS. Sponsored by the Actors' Fund of America. (Duke Ellington Room, Manhattan Plaza, 400 W. 43rd St. No tickets necessary.). . . ¶ Jan. 19 at 6: Director Alexandre Rockwell and actors Seymour Cassel and Steve Buscemi will discuss their recent movie, "In the Soup." (Kaplan Penthouse, Rose Building, 165 W. 65th St. For information, call 875-5444.). . . ¶ Jan. 19 at 6: Olivier Bernier will talk about Frederick the Great's palaces and art collection. (Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 83rd St. 570-3949.)

Walks and Tours—Jan. 16-17: Several walks around lower Manhattan, devoted to its history and architecture; sponsored by Sidewalks of New York. For more information, call 517-0201. . . . ¶ Jan. 17 at noon: Tour of Ellis Island, focussing on the Jewish experience; sponsored by Big Onion Walking Tours. For more information, call 439-1090. . . . ¶ Jan. 17 at 1: A tour of the Steinhardt Conservatory, concentrating on its African plants. (Brooklyn Botanic Garden, 1000 Washington Ave., near Grand Army Plaza. No tickets necessary.)



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Max Roach in a tribute to Martin Luther King, Jr.

GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

THE MOVIE HOUSES

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			13	14	15	16
17	18	19				

FILMS ACCOMPANIED BY A DAGGER ARE DESCRIBED IN "MOVIES IN BRIEF," STARTING ON PAGE 26.

EAST SIDE

Angelika Film Center, 18 W. Houston St. (995-2000)
Theatre 1: "Enchanted April" (directed by Mike Newell).
Theatre 2: "The Crying Game" (†).
Theatre 3: "Peter's Friends" (Kenneth Branagh), with Branagh, Emma Thompson, Rita Rudner, Stephen Fry, and Hugh Laurie.
Theatre 4: Through Jan. 14: "Peter's Friends." From Jan. 15: "A Captive in the Land" (John Berry), with Sam Waterston and Alexander Potapov.
Theatre 5: "The Crying Game" (†).
Theatre 6: "Bad Lieutenant" (Abel Ferrara), with Harvey Keitel.

Little Theatre, Public Theatre, 425 Lafayette St. (598-7171)
(Separate admissions) "Il Portaborse" (1991, Daniele Luchetti; in Italian); and "Night and Day" (Chantal Akerman, in French).

Movieland 8th Street Triplex, 36 E. 8th. (477-6600)
Theatre 1: "Chaplin" (†).
Theatre 2: "The Bodyguard" (†).
Theatre 3: "Home Alone 2: Lost in New York" (†).

Village Theatre VII, 3rd Ave. at 11th. (982-0400)
Theatre 1: "Bram Stoker's Dracula" (Francis Ford Coppola).
Theatre 2: "A Few Good Men" (†).
Theatre 3: "Malcolm X" (†).
Theatre 4: "A River Runs Through It" (Robert Redford).
Theatre 5: "Damage" (Louis Malle), with Jeremy Irons.
Theatre 6: "Forever Young" (†).
Theatre 7: Through Jan. 14: "A Few Good Men" (†). From Jan. 15: "Nowhere to Run" (Robert Harmon), with Jean-Claude Van Damme.

Village East Cinemas, 2nd Ave. at 12th. (529-6799)
Theatre 1: "Used People" (Beeban Kidron), with Shirley MacLaine, Kathy Bates, Jessica Tandy, and Marcello Mastroianni.
Theatre 2: Through Jan. 14: "Used People." From Jan. 15: "Alive" (Frank Marshall), with Ethan Hawke and Vincent Spano.
Theatre 3: "Leprechaun" (Mark Jones), with Warwick Davis.
Theatre 4: "Aladdin" (†).
Theatre 5: "Howards End" (James Ivory).
Theatre 6: "The Player" (†).
Theatre 7: (Matinées only) "The Muppet Christmas Carol" (Brian Henson); and (evenings only) "The Distinguished Gentleman" (Jonathan Lynn), with Eddie Murphy.

19th Street East 6, B'way at 19th. (260-8000)
Theatre 1: "Bram Stoker's Dracula" (Francis Ford Coppola).
Theatre 2: To be announced.
Theatre 3: Through Jan. 14: "Leap of Faith" (Richard Pearce), with Steve Martin. From Jan. 15: "Alive" (Frank Marshall), with Ethan Hawke and Vincent Spano.
Theatre 4: "The Bodyguard" (†).
Theatre 5: "Chaplin" (†).
Theatre 6: "Aladdin" (†).

Gramercy, Lexington at 23rd. (475-1660)
"Flirting" (John Duigan).

Bay Cinema, 2nd Ave. at 32nd. (679-0160)
"Bram Stoker's Dracula" (Francis Ford Coppola).

Murray Hill Cinemas, 160 E. 34th. (689-6548)
Theatre 1: Through Jan. 14: "The Distinguished Gentleman" (Jonathan Lynn), with Eddie Murphy. From Jan. 15: "Alive" (Frank Marshall), with Ethan Hawke, Josh Hamilton, and Vincent Spano.
Theatre 2: Through Jan. 14: "A River Runs Through It" (Robert Redford). From Jan. 15: "Body of Evidence" (†).
Theatre 3: "Aladdin" (†).
Theatre 4: Through Jan. 14: (matinées only) "The Muppet Christmas Carol" (Brian Henson); and (evenings only) "Glengarry Glen Ross" (James Foley), with Al Pacino and Jack Lemmon. From Jan. 15: "Nowhere to Run" (Robert Harmon), with Jean-Claude Van Damme.

34th Street Showplace, 238 E. 34th. (532-5544)
Theatre 1: "Malcolm X" (†).
Theatre 2: "Leap of Faith" (Richard Pearce), with Steve Martin.
Theatre 3: "Leprechaun" (Mark Jones), with Warwick Davis.

34th St. East, 241 E. 34th. (683-0255)
"A Few Good Men" (†).

Sutton I and 2, 3rd Ave. at 57th. (759-1411)
Theatre 1: "The Crying Game" (†).
Theatre 2: "The Crying Game" (†).

Gotham Cinema, 3rd Ave. at 58th. (759-2262)
"Hoffa" (†).

Plaza, 42 E. 58th. (355-3320)
"Reservoir Dogs" (Quentin Tarantino), with Harvey Keitel.

Manhattan Twin, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (935-6420)
Theatre 1: "Trespass" (†).
Theatre 2: "Leprechaun" (Mark Jones), with Warwick Davis.

59th Street East Cinema, 239 E. 59th. (759-4630)
"A River Runs Through It" (Robert Redford).

Baronet and Coronet, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (355-1663)
Theatre 1: "Used People" (Beeban Kidron), with Shirley MacLaine, Kathy Bates, Jessica Tandy, and Marcello Mastroianni.
Theatre 2: Through Jan. 14: "Toys" (Barry Levinson), with Robin Williams. From Jan. 15: "Body of Evidence" (†).

Cinema I, Cinema II, and Cinema 3rd Avenue, 3rd Ave. at 60th. (753-6022)
Theatre 1: Through Jan. 14: "Aladdin" (†). From Jan. 15: "Alive" (Frank Marshall), with Ethan Hawke and Vincent Spano.
Theatre 2: "Damage" (Louis Malle), with Jeremy Irons.
Theatre 3: (Matinées only) "The Muppet Christmas Carol" (Brian Henson); and (evenings only) "The Distinguished Gentleman" (Jonathan Lynn), with Eddie Murphy.

First & 62nd Cinemas, 400 E. 62nd. (752-4600)
Theatre 1: "Home Alone 2: Lost in New York" (†).
Theatre 2: "Lorenzo's Oil" (†).
Theatre 3: "Lorenzo's Oil" (†).
Theatre 4: "Scent of a Woman" (†).
Theatre 5: "Lorenzo's Oil" (†).
Theatre 6: "Scent of a Woman" (†).

Gemini I and 2, 2nd Ave. at 64th. (832-1670)
Theatre 1: "Malcolm X" (†).
Theatre 2: "Chaplin" (†).

Beekman, 2nd Ave. at 66th. (737-2622)
"A Few Good Men" (†).

New York Twin, 2nd Ave. at 67th. (744-7339)
Theatre 1: "The Bodyguard" (†).
Theatre 2: Through Jan. 14: "Leap of Faith" (Richard Pearce), with Steve Martin. From Jan. 15: "Nowhere to Run" (Robert Harmon), with Jean-Claude Van Damme.

68th St. Playhouse, 3rd Ave. at 68th. (734-0302)
"Passion Fish" (John Sayles), with Mary McDonnell and Alfre Woodard.

Tower East, 3rd Ave. at 71st. (879-1313)
"Forever Young" (†).

East 85th Street, 1st Ave. at 85th. (249-5100)
Through Jan. 14: "Leap of Faith" (Richard Pearce), with Steve Martin.
From Jan. 15: "Body of Evidence" (†).

Park & 86th Street Cinemas, 125 E. 86th. (534-1880)
Theatre 1: "Home Alone 2: Lost in New York" (†).
Theatre 2: "Scent of a Woman" (†).

Orpheum VII, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (876-2400)
Theatre 1: "Malcolm X" (†).
Theatre 2: "A Few Good Men" (†).
Theatre 3: "The Bodyguard" (†).
Theatre 4: "Hoffa" (†).
Theatre 5: (Matinées only) "The Muppet Christmas Carol" (Brian Henson); and (evenings only) "Bram Stoker's Dracula" (Francis Ford Coppola).
Theatre 6: "Forever Young" (†).
Theatre 7: Through Jan. 14: "A Few Good Men" (†). From Jan. 15: "Nowhere to Run" (Robert Harmon), with Jean-Claude Van Damme.

86th Street East Twin, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (249-1144)
Theatre 1: "Leprechaun" (Mark Jones), with Warwick Davis.
Theatre 2: "Aladdin" (†).

WEST SIDE

Film Forum, 209 W. Houston St. (727-8110)
Theatre 1: "Money Man" (1992, directed by Philip Haas), a documentary.
Theatre 2: See listings under Revival Houses.
Theatre 3: "Daddy and the Muscle Academy" (Ilppo Pohjola, in English and Finnish) and "Time Expired" (Danny Leiner).

Waverly I and 2, 6th Ave. at 3rd. (929-8037)
Theatre 1: "Hoffa" (†).
Theatre 2: "Leap of Faith" (Richard Pearce), with Steve Martin.

Art Greenwich Twin, Greenwich Ave. at 12th. (929-3350)
Theatre 1: "Scent of a Woman" (†).
Theatre 2: Through Jan. 14: "Toys" (Barry Levinson), with Robin Williams. From Jan. 15: "Body of Evidence" (†).

Quad Cinema, 34 W. 13th. (255-8800)
Theatre 1: "Tous les Matins du Monde" (Alain Corneau, in French), with Jean-Pierre Marielle, Gérard Depardieu, Anne Brochet, and Guillaume Depardieu.
Theatre 2: "Reservoir Dogs" (Quentin Tarantino), with Harvey Keitel.
Theatre 3: "Intervista" (Federico Fellini, in Italian), with Marcello Mastroianni and Anita Ekberg.
Theatre 4: "The Match Factory Girl" (Aki Kaurismaki, in Finnish).

Chelsea Cinemas, 260 W. 23rd. (691-4744)
Theatre 1: "A Few Good Men" (†).
Theatre 2: "Scent of a Woman" (†).
Theatre 3: "Scent of a Woman" (†).
Theatre 4: Through Jan. 14: "The Distinguished Gentleman" (Jonathan Lynn), with Eddie Murphy. From Jan. 15: "Body of Evidence" (†).
Theatre 5: "Hoffa" (†).
Theatre 6: "Toys" (Barry Levinson), with Robin Williams.
Theatre 7: "Home Alone 2: Lost in New York" (†).
Theatre 8: "Forever Young" (†).
Theatre 9: Through Jan. 14: "Used People" (Beeban Kidron), with Shirley MacLaine, Kathy Bates, Jessica Tandy, and Marcello Mastroianni. From Jan. 15: "Nowhere to Run" (Robert Harmon), with Jean-Claude Van Damme.

23rd St. West Triplex, 333 W. 23rd. (989-0060)
Theatre 1: "Leprechaun" (Mark Jones), with Warwick Davis.
Theatre 2: "Trespass" (†).
Theatre 3: (Matinées only) "The Muppet Christmas Carol" (Brian Henson); and (evenings only) "Malcolm X" (†).

Guild, 33 W. 50th. (757-2406)
"Aladdin" (†).

Worldwide Cinemas, 50th St. between 8th and 9th Aves. (246-1583)
Theatre 1: "A Few Good Men" (†).
Theatre 2: "The Player" (†).
Theatre 3: "Toys" (Barry Levinson), with Robin Williams.
Theatre 4: "Enchanted April" (Mike Newell).
Theatre 5: "Glengarry Glen Ross" (James Foley), with Al Pacino and Jack Lemmon.
Theatre 6: "A River Runs Through It" (Robert Redford).

Ziegfeld, 141 W. 54th. (765-7600)
"Hoffa" (†).

Festival, 6 W. 57th. (307-7856)
"Malcolm X" (†).

57th St. Playhouse, 110 W. 57th. (581-7360)
"Damage" (Louis Malle), with Jeremy Irons.

Carnegie Hall Cinemas, 7th Ave. between 56th and 57th. (265-2520)
Theatre 1: "Peter's Friends" (Kenneth Branagh), with Branagh, Emma Thompson, Rita Rudner, Stephen Fry, and Hugh Laurie.
Theatre 2: "Peter's Friends."

Fine Arts, 4 W. 58th. (980-5656)
"The Lover" (Jean-Jacques Annaud).

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MOVIE HOUSES—Cont'd

Cinema 3, 2 W. 59th. (752-5959)
"Howards End" (James Ivory).

Columbus Circle, B'way at 61st. (247-5070)
"Forever Young" (†).

62nd & Broadway, 62 W. 62nd. (265-7466)
"Used People" (Beeban Kidron), with Shirley MacLaine, Kathy Bates, Jessica Tandy, and Marcello Mastroianni.

Lincoln Plaza Cinemas, B'way at 63rd. (757-2280)
Theatre 1: "Tous les Matins du Monde" (Alain Corneau, in French), with Jean-Pierre Marielle, Gérard Depardieu, Anne Brochet, and Guillaume Depardieu.
Theatre 2: "Indochine" (Régis Wargnier, in French), with Catherine Deneuve.
Theatre 3: "The Crying Game" (†).
Theatre 4: "The Crying Game" (†).
Theatre 5: "The Crying Game" (†).
Theatre 6: "Indochine."

Regency, B'way at 67th. (724-3700)
"Scent of a Woman" (†).

84th Street Sixplex, B'way at 84th. (877-3600)
Theatre 1: "Leap of Faith" (Richard Pearce), with Steve Martin.
Theatre 2: "Chaplin" (†).
Theatre 3: Through Jan. 14: "The Distinguished Gentleman" (Jonathan Lynn), with Eddie Murphy. From Jan. 15: "Body of Evidence" (†).
Theatre 4: "The Bodyguard" (†).
Theatre 5: "Aladdin" (†).
Theatre 6: "A Few Good Men" (†).

Metro Cinema 1 and 2, B'way at 99th. (222-1200)
Theatre 1: (Matinées only) "The Muppet Christmas Carol" (Brian Henson); and (evenings only) "Toys" (Barry Levinson), with Robin Williams.
Theatre 2: "Home Alone 2: Lost in New York" (†).

Olympia I and II, B'way at 107th. (865-8128)
Theatre 1: "Leprechaun" (Mark Jones), with Warwick Davis.
Theatre 2: "Trespass" (†).

TIMES SQUARE AREA

Criterion Center, B'way at 44th. (354-0900)
Theatre 1: "Trespass" (†).
Theatre 2: Through Jan. 14: "Trespass" (†). From Jan. 15: "Body of Evidence" (†).
Theatre 3: "The Bodyguard" (†).
Theatre 4: "Trespass" (†).
Theatre 5: "Malcolm X" (†).
Theatre 6: "Leprechaun" (directed by Mark Jones), with Warwick Davis.
Theatre 7: "Home Alone 2: Lost in New York" (†).

Embassy 1, B'way at 46th. (302-0494)
Through Jan. 14: "The Distinguished Gentleman" (Jonathan Lynn), with Eddie Murphy. From Jan. 15: "Alive" (Frank Marshall), with Ethan Hawke and Vincent Spano.

Embassy 2, 3, and 4, 7th Ave. at 47th. (730-7262)
Theatre 1: Through Jan. 14: "The Muppet Christmas Carol" (Brian Henson). From Jan. 15: "The Distinguished Gentleman" (Jonathan Lynn), with Eddie Murphy.
Theatre 2: "Bad Lieutenant" (Abel Ferrara), with Harvey Keitel.
Theatre 3: "Bram Stoker's Dracula" (Francis Ford Coppola).

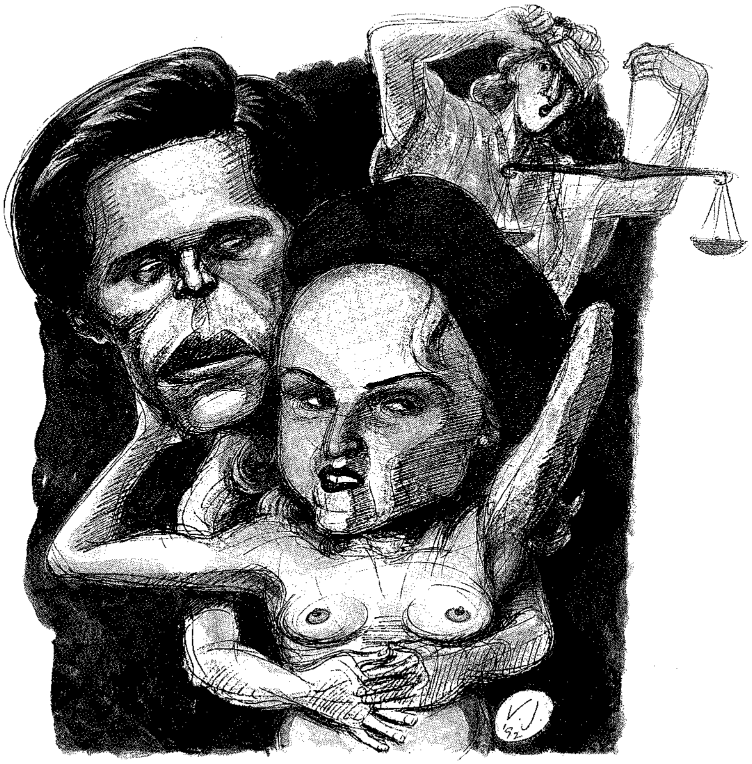
Astor Plaza, 44th St. at B'way. (869-8340)
Through Jan. 14: "Leap of Faith" (Richard Pearce), with Steve Martin.
From Jan. 15: "Nowhere to Run" (Robert Harmon), with Jean-Claude Van Damme.

National Twin, B'way at 44th. (869-0950)
Theatre 1: "Scent of a Woman" (†).
Theatre 2: "A Few Good Men" (†).

REVIVAL HOUSES

Film Forum 2, 209 W. Houston St. (727-8110)
Jan. 13: "The Petrified Forest" (1936, directed by Archie Mayo), with Leslie Howard, Bette Davis, and Humphrey Bogart; and "The Man with Two Faces" (1934, Mayo), with Edward G. Robinson.
Jan. 14: "Laughter" (†); and "Ladies' Man" (1931, Lothar Mendes), with William Powell, Kay Francis, and Carole Lombard.
Jan. 15-16: A program of short films written by, and starring, Robert Benchley; and "The Show-Off" (1934, Charles Reisner), with Spencer Tracy and Madge Evans.
Jan. 17-18: "A Night at the Opera" (†); and "Roman Scandals" (1933, Frank Tuttle), with Eddie Cantor and Ruth Etting.
From Jan.19: "Crime Without Passion" (†); and "The Scoundrel" (1935, Ben Hecht and Charles MacArthur), with Noël Coward.

Theatre 80 St. Marks, 80 St. Marks Pl. (254-7400)
Jan. 13: "Knight Without Armor" (1937, Jacques Feyder), with Marlene Dietrich and Robert Donat; and "Seven Sinners" (†).
Jan. 14: "Kiss Me Deadly" (1955, Robert Aldrich), with Ralph Meeker; and "The Big Knife" (1955, Aldrich), with Jack Palance.
Jan. 15-16: "Lolita" (see page 26); and "Killer's Kiss" (1955, Stanley Kubrick), with Frank Silvera.
Jan. 17: "Persona" (1967, Ingmar Bergman; in Swedish), with Bibi Andersson and Liv Ullmann; and "The Seventh Seal" (1956, Bergman; in Swedish), with Max von Sydow.
Jan. 18: "The Tenant" (1976, Roman Polanski),



Willem Dafoe and Madonna in "Body of Evidence"

VICTOR JUHASZ

with Polanski; and "Knife in the Water" (1962, Polanski; in Polish).

Jan. 19: "The Wrong Man" (1956, Alfred Hitchcock), with Henry Fonda; and "Dial M for Murder" (1954, Hitchcock), with Ray Milland, Grace Kelly, and Robert Cummings.

FILM LIBRARIES, ETC.

MUSEUM OF MODERN ART, Roy and Niuta Titus Theatres, 11 W. 53rd St. (708-9480)—Jan. 14 at 2:30: "Jim Thorpe—All American" (1951, directed by Michael Curtiz), with Burt Lancaster. . . . ¶ Jan. 14 at 3 and 6: "Palestinian Diaries" (1992, Nazeh Adel Darwazeh, Suher Ismael, and Abdel Salam Shihada), a documentary. . . . ¶ Jan. 14 at 6: "White Christmas" (1954, Curtiz), with Bing Crosby, Danny Kaye, Rosemary Clooney, Vera-Ellen, and Dean Jagger. . . . ¶ Jan. 15 at 2:30 and Jan. 17 at 5: "Force of Arms" (1951, Curtiz), with William Holden, Nancy Olson, and Frank Lovejoy. . . . ¶ Jan. 15 at 6 and Jan. 17 at 2: "Bright Leaf" (1950, Curtiz), with Gary Cooper, Lauren Bacall, and Patricia Neal. . . . ¶ Jan. 16 at 2 and Jan. 18 at 6: "The Breaking Point" (1950, Curtiz), with John Garfield, Neal, and Phyllis Thaxter. . . . ¶ Jan. 16 at 2:30 and Jan. 17 at 5: "Ten Nights in a Barroom" (1926, Colored Players Film Corp; silent). . . . ¶ Jan. 16 at 5 and Jan. 18 at 2:30: "Flamingo Road" (†). . . . ¶ Jan. 16 at 5 and Jan. 18 at 3: "Body and Soul" (1924, Oscar Micheaux; silent), with Paul Robeson. . . . ¶ Jan. 17 at 2:30 and Jan. 18 at 6: "Borderline" (1928, Kenneth MacPherson; silent), with Robeson. . . . ¶ Jan. 19 at 2:30: "The Proud Rebel" (1958, Curtiz), with Alan Ladd, Olivia de Havilland, Jagger, and David Ladd. . . . ¶ Jan. 19 at 6: "The Egyptian" (1954, Curtiz), with Edmund Purdom.

WALTER READE THEATRE, Lincoln Center, 165 W. 65th St., plaza level. (875-5600)—Jan. 13 at 2: "The Masked Frog" (1949, Herald Reinl; in German). . . . ¶ Jan. 13 at 4: "Where Is Coletti?" (1913, Max Mack). . . . ¶ Jan. 14 at 2: "The Bear of Baskerville" (1915, Harry Piel) and "A Hell of a Reporter" (1929, Ernst Laemmle). . . . ¶ Jan. 14 at 4: "Dr. Crippen on Board" (1942, Erich Engels; in German). . . . ¶ Jan. 15 at 2 and 6: "The Man in the Basement" (1914, Joe May) and "The Dead Awaken" (1915, Adolph Gärtner). . . . ¶ Jan. 15 at 4 and 8 and Jan. 16 at 4 and 6: "The Glass Cell" (1978, Hans W. Geissendörfer; in German). . . . ¶ Jan. 16 at 2: "Otto Is a Rhino" (1982, Rumle Hammerich). . . . ¶ Jan. 16 at 8:15: "Charlotte: Life or Theater?" (1992, Richard Dindo). . . . ¶ Jan. 17 at 2: "Grand Concert of the People" (1991, Samen Aronovich; in Russian). . . . ¶ Jan. 17 at 5:15 and Jan. 18 at 9: "Father and His Three Sons—The Bartos Family" (1988, Péter Forgács). . . . ¶ Jan. 17 at 6:45, Jan. 18 at 4:30, and Jan. 19 at 2: "A Vision in the Darkness" (1991, Sophie Bissonette). . . . ¶ Jan. 17 at 9, Jan. 18 at 6:45, and Jan. 19 at 4: "Berlin—Jerusalem" (1989, Amos Gitai). . . . ¶ Jan. 18 at 2 and Jan. 19 at 6:15: "Labyrinth" (1992, Jaromil Jires; in German). . . . ¶ Jan. 19 at 8:30: "Stavisky" (1974, Alain Resnais; in French), with Jean-Paul Belmondo and Charles Boyer.

MUSEUM OF TELEVISION AND RADIO, 25 W. 52nd St. (621-6800)—"Wings" (1983, John Madden), with Constance Cummings, Mary Joan Negro, and James Tolkan. (Showings Tuesdays through Sundays at 2.). . . ¶ Jan. 14 at 6 and Jan. 15 at 6:30: "Lemon Sky" (1988, Jan Egelson), with Kevin Bacon, Tom Atkins, Lindsay Crouse, and Kyra Sedgwick.

JAPAN SOCIETY, 333 E. 47th St. (752-0824)—Jan. 15 at 6:30: "Film Actress" (1987, Kon Ichikawa; in Japanese), with Sayuri Yoshinaga as Kinuyo Tanaka; and "Okoto and Sasuke" (1935, Yasujiro Shimazu; in Japanese), with Tanaka.

FLORENCE GOULD HALL, 55 E. 59th St. (355-6160)—Jan. 13 at 12:30, 3:15, 6, and 8:45: "Beauties of the Night" (1952, René Clair; in French), with Gérard Philipe, Martine Carol, and Gina Lollobrigida.

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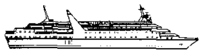

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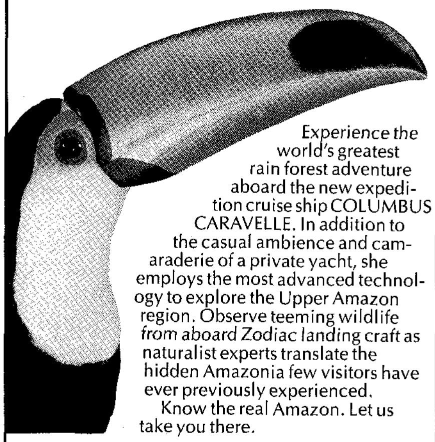

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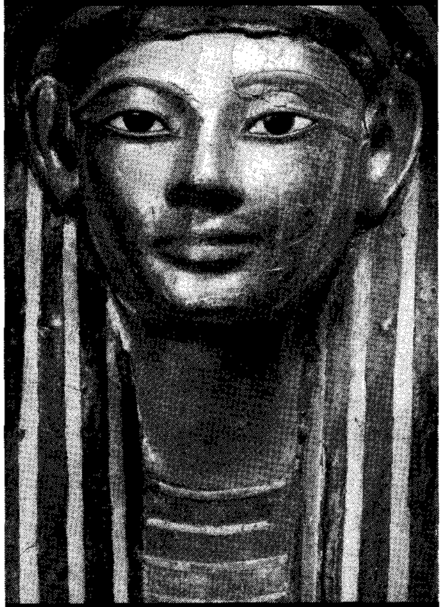

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Quilty by Suspicion

FROM the beginning, British-comedy fans loved the work of Peter Sellers, for its wit and sure attack *and* for its fillip of emotion. But it took a brilliant young American director with a hip, cosmopolitan temperament to exploit his talent fully. For his 1962 movie version of Vladimir Nabokov's "Lolita," Stanley Kubrick chose Sellers to play what could have been a subordinate role—not Humbert Humbert (James Mason), the French-lit professor obsessed by the title nymphet (Sue Lyon), but Quilty, the television playwright and minor celebrity who lures her away. With Kubrick in control, Quilty also steals the movie (playing January 15-16, at Theatre 80 St. Marks). The emphasis on Quilty is prescient: if this were a 1993 comedy about the Long Island Lolita, Quilty would be the guy tying up the TV rights.

As Quilty, Sellers is quicksilver-changeable—a portrait of the artist as a phony. He's ostentatiously high style. At a summer dance in a high-school gym, he manages to look good even though he bops only from the chest up. As he haunts Humbert, he takes on diverse flaky disguises; at one point, he impersonates a suspiciously ingratiating state cop—the kind of weirdo turn Norman Mailer once revelled in. When Quilty poses as a German psychologist, the dagger-glint in his eyes lets Humbert know that the pseudo shrink has his number. Sellers' Quilty sees through the weakness and hypocrisy in Humbert. In the film's daring narrative frame, you feel that the ultra-civilized Humbert is able to kill Quilty because the victim starts his death scene under a sheet and finishes it hiding behind a painting. In the end, Humbert doesn't have to look at him.

(The following notes are by Pauline Kael, Terrence Rafferty, and Michael Sragow.)

ALADDIN—Spiffy, inventive, and hilarious. The directors, John Musker and Ron Clements, who collaborated on the screenplay with Ted Elliott and Terry Rossio, streamline the traditional Aladdin story into a contest between the boy and a towering vizier-wizard named Jafar, Aladdin's rival for the hand of the Sultan's daughter, Princess Jasmine. What makes this wisecracking cartoon such intense, giddy fun is the eruption of uninhibited parody that Robin Williams provides as the voice of the Genie in Aladdin's lamp. The Genie mutates into dozens of variations on himself as Williams impersonates everyone from William F. Buckley, Jr., to Arsenio Hall. The animators' quick-draw craftsmanship keeps up with Williams' breakaway creativity. With the voices of Scott Weinger, Linda Larkin, Jonathan Freeman, and Gilbert Gottfried (who unexpectedly triumphs as Jafar's tough parrot, Iago); composer Alan Menken contributes five songs, with lyrics by Tim Rice and the late Howard Ashman.—M.S. (Reviewed in our issue of 11/30/92.) (Village East Cinemas, 19th Street East 6, Murray Hill Cinemas, 86th Street East Twin, Guild, and 84th Street Sixplex. . . . ¶ Cinema I; through Jan. 14.)

THE BODYGUARD—According to the screenwriter (and co-producer), Lawrence Kasdan, the script for this picture was written in 1975 as a possible vehicle for Steve McQueen. In lieu of McQueen, Kevin Costner plays the title character, a retired Secret Service man who is hired to protect a famous singer (played by Whitney Houston). Costner sports a fuzzy crew-cut that's more travesty than homage, and he's very grim; he looks as if he were still troubled by inconsistencies in the Warren Commission report. Houston flings herself repeatedly at the taciturn hero, begging him for both sex and manly state-of-the-art security. It is, perhaps, a sign of progress that a big-budget commercial picture like this can feature a romance between a white man and a black woman without ever making the racial difference an issue. It would be a more encouraging sign if the movie were any good. Directed by Mick Jackson.—T.R. (12/14/92) (Movieland 8th Street Triplex, 19th Street East 6, New York Twin, Orpheum VII, 84th Street Sixplex, and Criterion Center.)

BODY OF EVIDENCE—With Madonna, Willem Dafoe, Joe Mantegna, and Anne Archer; directed by Uli Edel. (See illustration on page 24.) (Murray Hill Cinemas, Coronet, East 85th Street, Art Greenwich Twin, Chelsea Cinemas, 84th Street Sixplex, and Criterion Center; starting Jan. 15.)

CHAPLIN—Aside from a few attempts to ape silent-slapstick style, the director of this sprawling bio-pic, Richard Attenborough, and the screenwriters (William Boyd, Bryan Forbes, and William Goldman, working from a story by Diana Hawkins), do their job like crammers. They overstuff nearly two and a half hours of running time with Chaplin's Dickensian London boyhood, his apprenticeship in vaudeville, his growing mastery of movie comedy, his frustrating love life, and the political consequences of his social conscience. Not surprisingly, simplification sets in early. Luckily, Robert Downey, Jr., as Chaplin, displays extraordinary physical and emotive talents. His deftness and agility make the loose recreations of Chaplin's evolving style fun to watch; his suggestion of an unruly interior life is what keeps the movie (barely) alive. And Geraldine Chaplin manages the feat of playing her own mad grandmother, imbuing Hannah Chaplin with a wrenching combination of wounded maternalism and addled propriety. The supporting cast includes Dan Aykroyd (as Mack Sennett), Kevin Kline (as Douglas Fairbanks), Diane Lane (as Paulette Goddard), and Penelope Ann Miller (as Edna Purviance).—M.S. (12/28/92-1/4/93) (Movieland 8th Street Triplex, 19th Street East 6, Gemini, and 84th Street Sixplex.)

CRIME WITHOUT PASSION (1934)—Ben Hecht and Charles MacArthur devised a tricky plot about a devilishly unscrupulous lawyer (Claude Rains), who looks for a perfect alibi to conceal a murder. They also produced and directed, and they got very fancy; their pseudo-stream-of-consciousness story is dolled up with a lot of symbolism and dated avant-garde novelties. The film, which emphasizes night-club life, was produced at the Astoria Studios in New York; Lee Garmes was the cinematographer and associate director, and the famous Slavko Vorkapich designed two montage sequences. The one with the Furies being unleashed is a true period piece; this is an entertainingly terrible movie. The blond Whitney Bourne is the lawyer's new love, and the brunette Margo his old love and his victim. With Esther

Dale, and a fleeting appearance by Helen Hayes in a hotel lobby.—P.K. (Film Forum 2; starting Jan. 19.)

The Crying Game—This amazing new movie by the Irish writer and director Neil Jordan ("Mona Lisa," "The Miracle") has the sure grip and the unstoppable momentum of a dream. Jordan tells the story of Fergus (Stephen Rea), a troubled I.R.A. gunman who undergoes a thorough emotional metamorphosis, and he makes the hero's change of heart moving and persuasive; the film inspires an irrational sort of trust, a willing suspension of something deeper and more fundamental than disbelief. The script is full of reversals and abrupt dislocations and, halfway through, the movie springs a huge, jaw-dropping surprise. Disorienting us isn't the ultimate aim of Jordan's artistic strategy, though; he jars us out of our accustomed responses to prepare us for the purer, more penetrating ones he really wants from us. The picture is a splendid entertainment—an elating, charmed sprint through all sorts of contemporary terrors. Also with Forest Whitaker, Miranda Richardson, Jim Broadbent, Adrian Dunbar, and a newcomer named Jaye Davidson, who is astonishing.—T.R. (11/16/92) (Angelika Film Center, Sutton, and Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.)

A Few Good Men—Tom Cruise and Jack Nicholson square off in this yuppie version of "The Caine Mutiny Court-Martial," with Cruise as a glib, Harvard-trained Navy lawyer defending two Marines accused of murder, and Nicholson as the Captain Queeg-like officer who set the crime in motion. The writer, Aaron Sorkin (who adapted his own hit play), and the director, Rob Reiner, seem to think the story has something to say about legal and military honor. They take issues that have been chewed over for centuries and finally succeed in reducing them to cud. The whole film, with its steady, important-picture pacing, its foursquare visual style, and its pseudo-profundity, is a piece of glorified banality. Nicholson boasts a couple of bravura scenes but Kevin Bacon gives the most persuasive performance, as the no-nonsense prosecutor.—M.S. (12/14/92) (Village Theatre VII, 34th St. East, Beekman, Orpheum VII, Chelsea Cinemas, Worldwide Cinemas, 84th Street Sixplex, and National Twin.)

Flamingo Road (1949)—The screen's supreme masochist—Joan Crawford—at it again. This time, she's a carnival hootchy-kootchy dancer stranded in a small town; she gets involved with a weakling—Zachary Scott, the same heel who betrayed her in "Mildred Pierce"—and she's implicated in murder again, and with the same director, Michael Curtiz, and the same producer, Jerry Wald. But the script lacks the mythic, overwrought James M. Cainisms of the earlier film. It's just garishly overwrought. The ostentatious miscasting of Sydney Greenstreet as a sheriff gives the picture a campy charm; he's a mean villain, persecuting the brave, suffering heroine—framing her, running her out of town, railroading her into prison. David Brian is the local political boss who falls in love with her; he seems not to see what we do—that she's rigid, monstrous. Robert Wilder's script is based on a play he wrote with Sally Wilder; additional dialogue by Edmund H. North.—P.K. (Museum of Modern Art; Jan. 16 and 18.)

Forever Young—A retro romance in the insufferably gloppy manner of Steven Spielberg's "Always" (which had many of us hoping "Never"). Mel Gibson stars as a daredevil Air Corps pilot in 1939 who volunteers for a cryogenics experiment after his true love (Isabel Glasser) enters a seemingly irreversible coma. By a twist of fate, he stays frozen for over fifty years, emerging with enough of his Dudley Do-Right manliness intact to impress single mom Jamie Lee Curtis, her young son, Elijah Wood, and even her dull suitor, Nicholas Surovy. The screenwriter, Jeffrey Abrams, has a mind that channel-hops from AMC to Nick at Nite: he stuffs the film with old-movie gimmicks and sitcom devices, such as Gibson's being able to propose marriage only when his lover is absent. The director, Steve Miner, matches the writer drip for drip. Gibson isn't smarmy, exactly, but the film makes him appear that way; it's like the joke in "L.A. Story" picturing him as the man of everybody's dreams, male or female. With George Wendt and David Marshall Grant.—M.S. (Village Theatre VII, Tower East, Orpheum VII, Chelsea Cinemas, and Columbus Circle.)

Hoffa—The life of the flamboyant labor leader, who lay down with mobsters and got up with subpoenas, is a terrific subject for a movie—a story of corruption and power, like "Citizen Kane" and the "Godfather" pictures. But what director Danny DeVito and screenwriter David Mamet have done here couldn't have been predicted. They've made a two-hour-and-fifteen-minute movie that doesn't tell the story of Jimmy Hoffa; they've made his life inconsequential. Their Hoffa (Jack Nicholson) is just a blustery movie tough guy: he gives speeches whose content we aren't encouraged to think about; he pops up in the foreground of labor disputes that haven't been explained to us; he appears before investigative panels whose purposes are unclear, and is interrogated about crimes we've neither seen nor heard about. "Hoffa" tells us less about Hoffa than it does about Mamet's chronic nostalgia for the manly-man ethos of yesteryear—a romantic vision of America, where beefy, two-fisted giants once walked and thugs were thugs, not corporate weasels. Also with Armand Assante, J. T. Walsh, Robert Prosky, and DeVito.—T.R. (12/28/92-1/4/93) (Gotham Cinema, Orpheum VII, Waverly, Chelsea Cinemas, and Ziegfeld.)

Home Alone 2: Lost in New York—The director, Chris Columbus, and the producer-writer, John Hughes, use the first "Home Alone" as a template. Leaning hard on the sensitive-brat charm of the eleven-year-old Macaulay Culkin, they duplicate and exaggerate every laugh-getting, tearjerking separation and reunion, every crowd-pleasing gibe and gambit. This time, young Kevin McCallister mistakenly boards a plane to Gotham while his folks fly off to Miami for their Christmas vacation. The filmmakers pump up the volume on the schmalz and sadism, hoping to attain a hyperbolic balance. What they achieve is double overkill. Culkin is directed as if he were an animatronic doll. He screams, he pouts, he proclaims "Yes!" Either you're captivated or you want to muzzle him. The new characters include Brenda Fricker as a homeless woman who devotes herself to pigeons, and Tim Curry, Dana Ivey, and Rob Schneider as nincompoop hotel workers. The repeat performers include Catherine O'Hara and John Heard (as Kevin's parents), and Joe Pesci and Daniel Stern (as Kevin's slapstick nemeses).—M.S. (11/30/92) (Movieland 8th Street Triplex, First & 62nd Cinemas, Park & 86th Street Cinemas, Chelsea Cinemas, Metro Cinema, and Criterion Center.)

Laughter (1930)—Just before his death, Herman J. Mankiewicz, who produced this film, said that of all the movies he'd worked on, it was his favorite. A lovely, sophisticated comedy, an ode to impracticality, it failed commercially but its attitudes and spirit influenced the screwball hits of the thirties. (Even the famous Bogart exchange with Claude Rains about coming to Casablanca for the waters is paraphrased from "Laughter.") Fredric March is the composer-hero who returns to New York after some expatriate years in Paris; he finds that the Follies beauty (Nancy Carroll) whom he loved has married for money and lost her gift of laughter. The pacing of the director, H. d'Abbadie d'Arrast, is a little leisurely, and he dawdles just when he should move faster, but he has visual style, especially when he works in interiors or in deliberately artificial sets. (Nature throws him off balance.) The Art Deco sets here are elegant, and the enchanting Nancy Carroll wears perhaps the best clothes ever seen on the screen (with the *possible* exception of Garbo's in "A Woman of Affairs"). And there's a simple scene with

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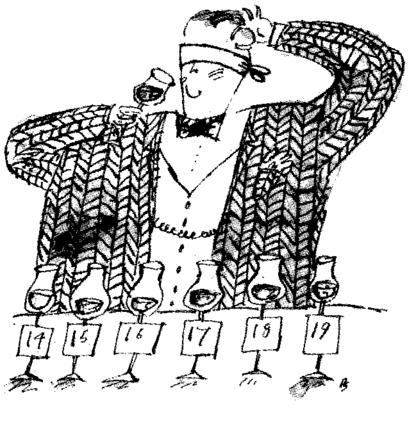

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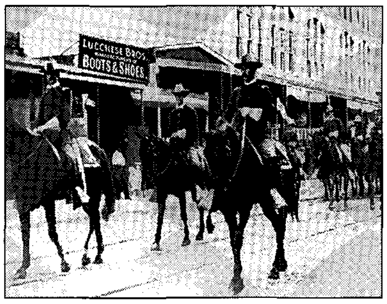

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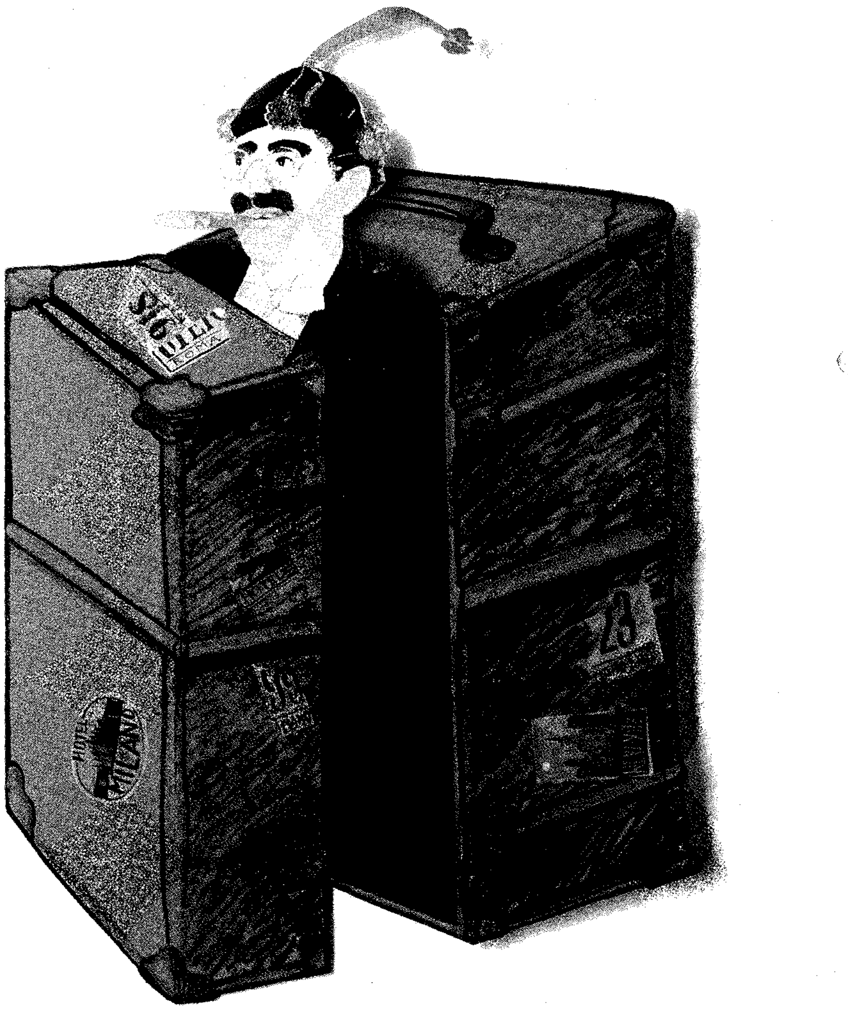


Groucho Marx in "A Night at the Opera"

PAOLO GUIDOTTI

March at the piano and Carroll and another girl (Diane Ellis) jazz dancing that is one of the loveliest, happiest moments in the movies of the period. The writing was mostly by Donald Ogden Stewart, though d'Abbadie d'Arrast and Douglas Doty had a share in it, and Mankiewicz probably set the tone; the script bogs down a little in conventional melodrama. With Frank Morgan as the beauty's millionaire husband and Glenn Anders in the boggy subplot.—P.K. (Film Forum 2; Jan. 14.)

LORENZO'S OIL—Susan Sarandon and Nick Nolte portray an extraordinary (real-life) couple named Michaela and Augusto Odone, whose five-year-old son, Lorenzo, is found to have an extremely rare, ruthlessly degenerative, incurable disease. Frustrated by the inadequancy of available therapies and outraged by the primitive state of knowledge about the disease, the Odones won't accept the inevitability of his fate until they've studied the disease thoroughly. It's easy to imagine the Odones' courage and tenacity processed by Hollywood into the sort of shrink-wrapped package of uplift that has, over the years, given the loftiest qualities of the human spirit a really bad name. But director George Miller, a former doctor best known for the punk-inflected "Mad Max" series of action movies, doesn't treat his characters reverently, and explains the data to us patiently, slowly, so we get caught up in the medical mystery. The result is an almost freak occurence: an inspirational drama that's genuinely inspiring. The honest emotion it produces out of what might have been banal tearjerker material is a small but real wonder. It gives human virtues a human scale. Also with Zack O'Malley Greenburg, Peter Ustinov, and Kathleen Wilhoite. Screenplay by Miller and Nick Enright.—T.R. (1/11/93) (First & 62nd Cinemas.)

MALCOLM X—There's a great deal of passion in Spike Lee's three-hour-and-twenty-minute adaptation of "The Autobiography of Malcolm X," but it's not an artist's passion. Malcolm, who achieved fame in the early sixties as a compelling spokesman for the black-pride philosophy of the Nation of Islam, is an unlikely hero for a big-studio prestige picture: he begins as a predatory street criminal, becomes a studious Muslim ascetic, and fulfills himself as a scourge. The movie doesn't provide readers of the autobiography anything like a fresh vision of its remarkable subject. The ponderous rhythms of the great-man bio-pic only emphasize the impossibility of rendering this story with conventional movie-narrative means. Denzel Washington's performance as Malcolm gets off to a rocky start—for the first hour, he's required to play the hero as a teen-ager—but it gains authority as the movie goes along. This film's Malcolm isn't so much a character as an image: a statue for us to look up at in wonder. Also with Angela Bassett, Delroy Lindo, Albert Hall, Spike Lee, and Al Freeman, Jr. (a wonderfully sly turn as the hero's mentor, Elijah Muhammad). The script, credited to Lee and Arnold Perl, incorporates (haphazardly) scenes and ideas from a scenario written more than twenty years ago by James Baldwin.—T.R. (11/30/92) (Village Theatre VII, 34th Street Showplace, Gemini, Orpheum VII, Festival, and Criterion Center. . . . ¶ 23rd St. West Triplex. Evenings only.)

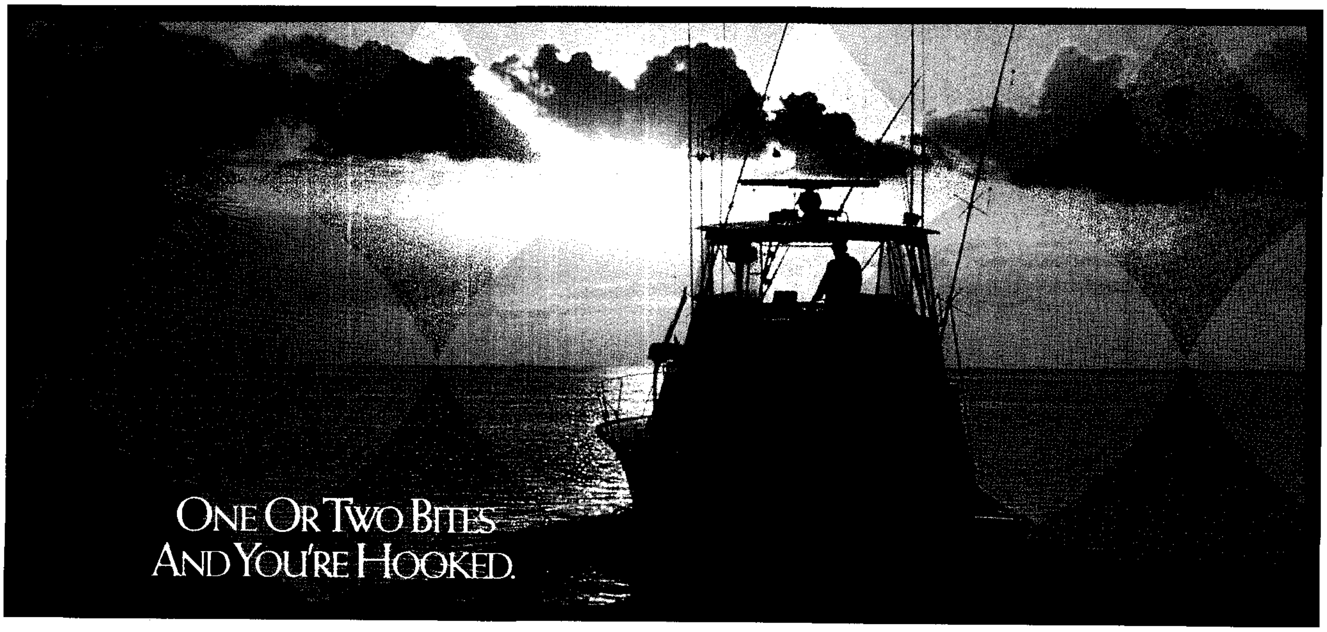
A NIGHT AT THE OPERA (1935)—The Marx Brothers sometimes said that this was their best film; it isn't, but it was their greatest hit. Two beautifully stuffed American targets—grand opera and high society—are left dismantled, flapping like scarecrows. (If you ever could listen to "Il Trovatore" with a straight face, you can never do so again.) Many writers have tried to analyze Marx Brothers wit, coming up with little monographs on "dissociated thinking," "disguised social protest," or "commedia dell'arte." Think about it too much and sanity, like a lettuce leaf, begins to wilt and curl at the edges. The Marx Brothers keep turning corners you didn't know were there, and while you're trying to break down the content of lines like Groucho's "You big bully, why are you hitting that little bully?" you miss the series of non sequiturs that are piling up on top of it. George S. Kaufman and Morrie Ryskind did the script, from a story by James Kevin McGuinness, and with additional material by Al Boasberg; Sam Wood directed. The cast includes Groucho's perennial grande-dame inamorta, Margaret Dumont, the most stately of stooges (her smirking dowager is rather like a comic derivative of Edna Purviance in Chaplin's movies). There are also the vocalizing lovers, Kitty Carlisle and Allan Jones, whom Irving Thalberg, the producer and a master diagnostician of popular taste, put in for people (what people?) to "identify with," and the cruel villain, Walter Woolf King. (Incredible as it may seem, the banal romantic melodrama which intermittently wrecks the movie proved sound at the box office.) This comedy has its classic sequence: the stateroom scene, which is widely regarded as the funniest five minutes in screen history. It will sustain you through the dreadful duets. With Sig Rumann.—P.K. (Film Forum 2; Jan. 17-18.)

The Player—The title character of Robert Altman's new movie is a young Hollywood studio executive named Griffin Mill (Tim Robbins), who, for no very good reason, murders an aspiring screenwriter. The picture is a brilliant dark comedy about the death of American filmmaking. It's like a documentary about a mirage: the world it shows us is sunlit and shimmering, and the people have the thin presence of holograms. Altman is doing one of his specialties here—exploring an odd American subculture—and when his idiosyncratic realism is applied to the insular, constantly self-regarding community of Hollywood "players" it has an almost hallucinatory effect. The movie has the exhilarating nonchalance of the director's seventies classics, and its tone is volatile, elusive: with breathtaking assurance, it veers from psychological-thriller suspense to goofball comedy to icy satire. Altman turns the self-reflective world of Hollywood into a fun house in which every grotesque distortion somehow appears to us as a newly discovered, paradoxical truth. Robbins gives a layered, richly suggestive performance—the sort of performance that Altman's style, at its best, produces without obvious effort. At sixty-seven, Altman still seems like the youngest filmmaker in America.—T.R. (4/20/92) (Village East Cinemas, and Worldwide Cinemas.)

Scent of a Woman—Director Martin Brest and screenwriter Bo Goldman labor mightily to design a holiday-season heart-warmer about a middle-aged blind man and a troubled teen-ager (Chris O'Donnell), but fortunately their low intentions are undone by the star, Al Pacino, whose performance taps emotions too complex and too frightening to be resolved by the simple moral victory that ends the picture. His Frank Slade, a retired Army officer and former aide to L.B.J., is a bitter, misanthropic, profoundly depressed man, and the actor makes us feel the full weight of the character's hopelessness. This is acting that chills the heart beyond any possibility of warming. The filmmakers may dismiss the audience with a banal lesson written on the blackboard—"Smell the roses" is the gist—but by the end we're not paying much attention. We're still sorting out the ambiguities and uncomfortable truths that Pacino's great performance has let us in on. He has led us to the heart of darkness, and there's no quick route back. Also with James Rebhorn and Gabrielle Anwar.—T.R. (12/28/92-1/4/93) (First & 62nd Cinemas, Park & 86th Street Cinemas, Art Greenwich Twin, Chelsea Cinemas, Regency, and National Twin.)

Seven Sinners (1940)—Marlene Dietrich's name is Bijou in this one, and her theme song is "I Can't Give You Anything but Love, Baby." The picture is a rowdy mediocrity. Bijou, who entertains in a South Seas café, the Seven Sinners, is so attractive to the U.S. Navy that the commander of the fleet finds her a problem. "The Navy has enough destroyers," he says. Tay Garnett's direction keeps the melodrama tolerable, but there's not much glamour in the material. John Wayne is the male lead, and the picture's big moment is a barroom brawl. With Albert Dekker, Broderick Crawford, Anna Lee, and Mischa Auer.—P.K. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; Jan. 13.)

Trespass—Walter Hill's rock-the-house urban-siege suspense film, about a nightmarish treasure hunt in a gutted factory, puts viewers in a force field that jangles nerves, heightens senses, and pumps adrenal glands. Bill Paxton and William Sadler play Arkansas firemen who follow a map to a stash of priceless gold church relics in an East St. Louis plant; Art Evans is the black squatter in their path; and Ice T and Ice Cube are the key members of an inner-city crime syndicate. They all collide—catastrophically. Hill doesn't belabor the point that the building and the battlefield it becomes are metaphors for the American city. The director plays that concept for raucous farce and rippling horror; he and his masterly editor, Freeman Davies, set off kinetic blasts in the midst of squalor. This film has the blaspheming explosiveness of contemporary black youth culture—it's visual rap. Robert Zemeckis and Bob Gale wrote the devilishly well-structured script; Ry Cooder composed the power-surging score.—M.S. (12/28/92-1/4/93) (Manhattan Twin, 23rd St. West Triplex, Olympia, and Criterion Center.)



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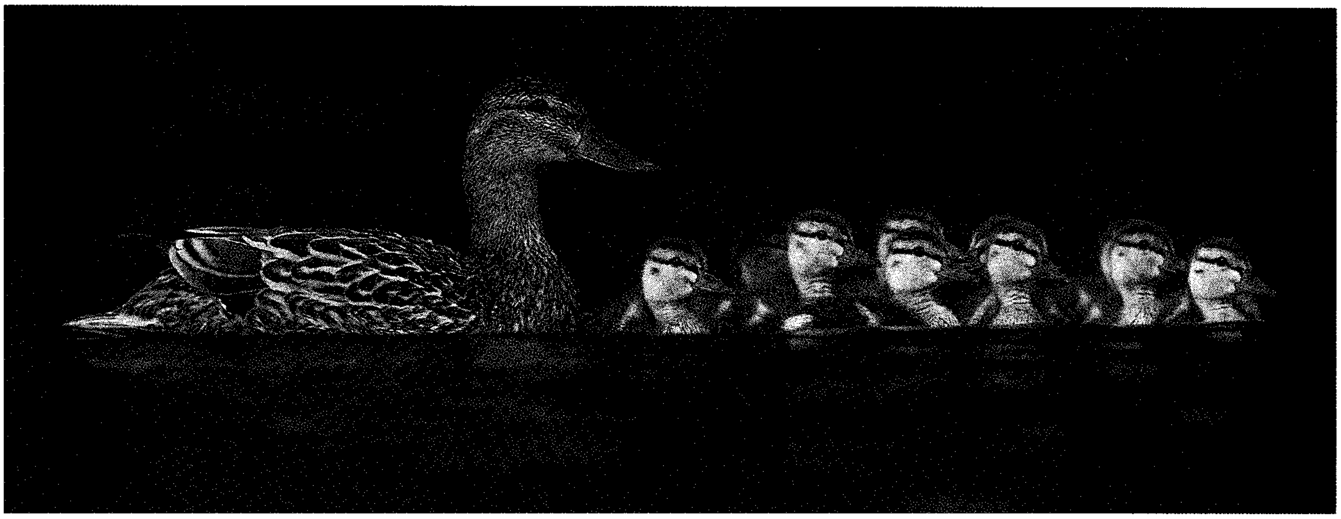

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GEORGE'S CHOICE

THE United States Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit is often called the second most important court in the nation. It has thirteen active judges, who, sitting in panels of three, rule on all appeals from the federal trial courts in New York, Connecticut, and Vermont. The Second Circuit has a rich history. Lawyers who argue in its elegant courtroom, on the seventeenth floor of the federal courthouse on Foley Square, stand between bronze busts of the court's most eminent alumni—Learned Hand and Henry Friendly—who are widely regarded as the greatest American judges never to have served on the Supreme Court. The Second Circuit has a new judge, Dennis G. Jacobs. The Senate confirmed his nomination on September 29th, making him the last federal judge in New York nominated by President Bush. He is a curious choice.

Between his graduation from law school, in 1973, and his appointment to the bench, Judge Jacobs held one job, as a lawyer with the prominent corporate-law firm of Simpson Thacher & Bartlett. He has none of the qualifications that the public and, certainly, most lawyers assume are required for a federal judgeship as important as one on the Second Circuit. He was never a judge on a lower court, a criminal prosecutor, or a defense attorney. He never worked for the government or performed any kind of public service. He never participated in a civil-rights case or in any case where constitutional issues played a major role. And, unlike many federal judges, he has shown no interest in legal scholarship; his sole published work since law school is a short article in the *Review of Securities Regulation* on which he collaborated in 1982.

WAYNE BRESSLER

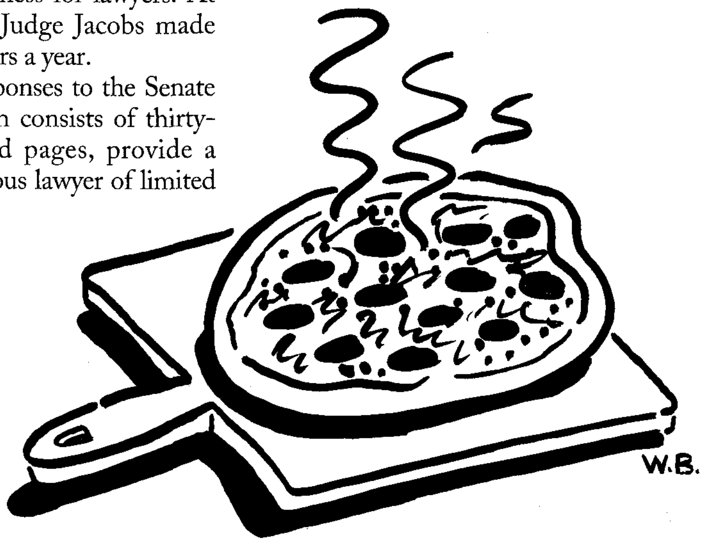
In his career at Simpson Thacher, he showed few signs of public spirit. He was never, for example, active in the local bar association. In his answers to the questionnaire that was given him by the Senate Judiciary Committee, Judge Jacobs says that he "organized" his firm's effort to aid the lawyers at Bronx Legal Services, but the people at Bronx Legal Services who established its relationship with Simpson Thacher say they have never met Judge Jacobs.

Most of Dennis Jacobs' professional activity for the past decade has been in the narrow field of reinsurance litigation. That area of the law concerns disputes between insurance companies about which of them should pay policyholders' claims. The cases, while important to the companies involved, are of little importance to the public. They are, however, very good business for lawyers. At Simpson Thacher, Judge Jacobs made about a million dollars a year.

Judge Jacobs' responses to the Senate questionnaire, which consists of thirty-two densely packed pages, provide a picture of a prosperous lawyer of limited interests and little distinction. They contain a single clue to why he was nominated. He was asked to list "all organizations to which you belong," and he listed just one: the Federalist Society.

The Federalist Society for Law and Public Policy Studies, which was founded in 1982, is, according to its statement of purpose, "a group of conservatives and libertarians interested in the current state of the legal order." The society quickly became the principal unofficial network of the Republican judicial revolution. Its meetings and seminars were training grounds for a generation of judges and academics. For Dennis Jacobs, mere membership in the society served to propel him from obscurity to a spot near the pinnacle of the judicial world.

That such a small thing could be enough to land someone on the Second Circuit is a sign of exhaustion in President Bush's effort to produce a reliably conservative judiciary. In the early eighties, President Reagan could select from an able assortment of conservatives to fill the federal bench. On the Second Circuit, for example, he named law-and-order trial judges like George C. Pratt and



esteemed conservative scholars like Ralph Winter. But after twelve years the ranks of conservatives who were both eminent and reliable had thinned. As the Jacobs nomination demonstrates, President Bush was ultimately forced to settle for reliability alone.

The Jacobs nomination also demonstrates a kind of exhaustion among the Democrats in the Senate. In the exercise of its constitutional obligation to "advise and consent" concerning the selection of judges, the Senate was virtually invisible as far as Judge Jacobs was concerned. His confirmation hearing, last August 11th, was almost comically perfunctory. Only one senator on the committee, Dennis DeConcini, of Arizona, sought any information from Jacobs: he asked Jacobs a few questions having to do with his background and his feelings about the British system of civil litigation (in which the losing party pays the winner's attorneys' fees), and expressed concern about judicial delays. The transcript of the entire hearing takes up less than seven double-spaced typed pages. Jacobs was confirmed by the full Senate without debate.

Over the past twelve years, the Senate has confirmed five hundred and nine federal judges nominated by Presidents Reagan and Bush, or almost two-thirds of those now on the bench, and confirmed virtually all of them without any serious debate. Nan Aron, the executive director of the Alliance for Justice, which has coördinated liberal opposition to Republican judicial nominees in recent years, says, "Judges get very little attention from senators or the public." Some public-interest organizations, like the N.A.A.C.P. and the Mexican-American Legal Defense and Education Funds, occasionally speak out in opposition to individual judges, but "members of the bar are reluctant to raise issues about judges if there's a chance they'll be confirmed, and most are," Aron says. "They don't want to jeopardize the interests of their clients by opposing judges they are going to have to appear in front of." Therefore, as happened with Judge Jacobs, the legal public-interest organizations choose silence, and so do most senators and most of the press.

The costs of that silence should not be underestimated. Federal judges have enormous power and wide discretion. Because the Supreme Court reviews only a few decisions each year, the lower federal courts usually serve as the final arbiter on the constitutionality of the nation's laws and the civil rights of its citizens. Federal judges also have life tenure. Dennis Jacobs is forty-eight years old.

BILL AND THE KING

When the Inaugural Parade heads up Pennsylvania Avenue, perhaps the most fitting salute to Bill Clinton may be the image, on a float, of the late Elvis Presley. Clinton, after all, is the first President-elect to have played "Heartbreak Hotel" on the saxophone, and he once described himself as "going nuts over Elvis."

Clinton may by now have noticed some eerie similarities between his life and Presley's. Both were born in small Southern towns. Both had weight problems. Like the precocious Clinton, who was first elected governor of Arkansas at thirty-two, Presley came to public notice at a very early age. When they reached their forties, both men were surrounded by bodyguards and lived in huge houses sought out by tourists. And, although Clinton is alive and Presley is dead, both have been spotted everywhere over the past decade. In Clinton's case, the ubiquity results from apparent perpetual political motion; in Presley's, the best explanation is that there has been an international outbreak of impersonators.

The first Presley impersonator to appear in an Inaugural Parade will take his place among the marching bands, drill teams, color guards, jugglers, and horses. Julie Gibson, the Inaugural Parade director, declares that the decision to include one came about by chance. "We didn't go out searching for Elvis impersonators, but we got several inquiries, from all over the country," she explains. "We said, 'What a great idea. It's so Bill Clinton.' "

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Ms. Gibson says that the best of the spontaneous submissions came from Jim and Wendy Mydlach, of Las Vegas, who produce an amalgam of song and satin costume which they call the Spirit of America and say is a "tribute" to Presley. Jim Mydlach, the director of safety for the Golden Nugget, performed a variety of promotional tasks for Presley in the nineteen-seventies, and Wendy Mydlach worked occasionally as a hair stylist for the singer's musicians. "We try to bring back the best years of Elvis's life," she says.

In their production the Mydlachs use dual impersonators: one for the revolutionary, pelvic Presley of the nineteen-fifties, who must have fascinated the pre-teen Clinton, as he did much of America; and the caped, bejewelled Presley of the nineteen-seventies, who took shots at his television set and died, apparently of a drug overdose, just over a year before Clinton was first elected governor. And therein lies a nettlesome problem. "They were both good," Ms. Gibson says, "but only one will be in the parade." That one, she says emphatically, will be the nineteen-fifties version, who wears a gold lamé jacket and sings "Don't Be Cruel" and "Blue Suède Shoes."

The Mydlachs are shaken at the prospect of having to separate their Elvises. "It's a package," Wendy Mydlach says, with a sad sigh. "That's what the Spirit of America is all about." It does not console her that in the United States Postal Service competition Clinton voted with the majority of Americans for the young-Presley stamp.

The Inaugural Parade Presley is Kevin Mills, who has been impersonating Elvis for eight years. In the curious ways that American life and art are sometimes linked, Mills, a restaurateur from Delran, New Jersey, has been affected by the new President much as Clinton was once dazzled by young Elvis. "When I saw Clinton playing 'Heartbreak Hotel' on the 'Arsenio Hall Show,' that's when it really hit me," Mills says. "That's one of the reasons I voted for him." It was not a vote registered in exit polls, but it is in such ways that the fate of the world is still influenced by a dead onetime truck-driver from Memphis. One can speculate whether Clinton, on the day of his swearing-in, may in mysterious fashion be affected by the *faux* Elvis from New Jersey, gyrating into history.

PARTY MADNESS

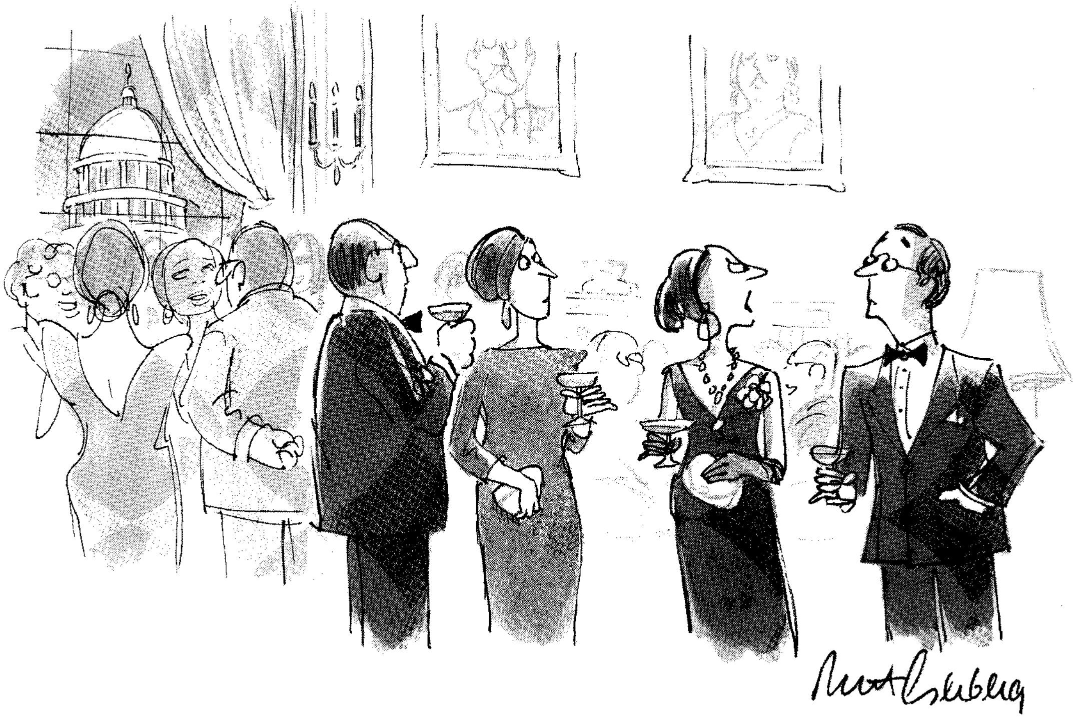
THERE was one question that Bill Clinton came to expect at all those talk-ins he held during the long election campaign: "Can I come to the Inaugural Ball?" He would smile and joke and move on to something else while the questioner, usually a woman, hugged an old American fantasy to herself: that the Inaugural Balls are a quadrennial nirvana, the grandest of all social occasions, a mixture of Tara and Buckingham Palace. The media hype them as sparkling and marvellous: On with the dance! Let joy be unconfined! Everyone wants to go. The fact is, though, that Inaugural Balls are quite horrible events, overpriced, overcrowded, and extravagantly overrated.

There are going to be eleven public balls in Washington on January 20th: in the Convention Center, in the Kennedy Center, in various hotel ballrooms, and in other large buildings. Seventy-one thousand people will have the privilege of shelling out a hundred and twenty-five dollars for a single ticket and thus paying a substantial part of the cost of the Inauguration. There will be at least five thousand people at each ball, jammed shoulder to shoulder and hip to thigh, and for hours at a stretch most of them will have nothing to eat, nothing to drink, nowhere to dance, nowhere to sit down, and nothing whatever to do. The new President and his wife will appear briefly, and the Secret Service will clear a space in the crowd to allow the Clintons to waltz together for two minutes. Then they will leave for the next party.

The ballgoer and her husband from Little Rock or Los Angeles will have to pay for their air tickets, a hotel room, a new dress, a rented tuxedo, local transportation, and other incidentals, in addition to the tickets to the ball, spending a couple of thousand dollars, at least, for the sort of experience they could undergo by descending into the subway at rush hour in their best clothes.

There will be some food, somewhere, at most of the balls, and anyone willing to fight her way through six thousand other guests may get some of it. There will be bands, or a disco, and plenty of noise, but no room to dance, remember, and no one will hear a word anyone else says. Some of the balls will have cash bars. Imagine six thousand thirsty people all heading for the bar together.

Among the other Inauguration events are some that could be much more fun—a folk festival on the Mall, for instance, where a score of large tents are being erected to protect people from bad weather. And then there will be private balls—offered by various interest groups, by MTV, by the American Legion, and by organizations that hope to do well out of the new regime—and grand parties for grand people. Some hosts of the paying events may resist the temptation to pack in as many people as possible and sacrifice enjoyment for revenue. Most of them won't. People who want to go to Washington to cheer the Clintons in and enjoy themselves would do well to find a restaurant, a bar, or a night club and stay there. At least, they are likely to get what they pay for.



"For God's sake, Austin, will you please stop saying 'Heck, even a blind hog can find an acorn'?"

• •

WAYS OF ESCAPE

NOBODY is looking forward to Bill Clinton's Inauguration with greater eagerness than Salman Rushdie, who on February 14th—St. Valentine's Day—will have spent four years under the shadow of the *fatwa*, the sentence of death pronounced upon him by the late Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini. While several Western governments have lately shown him sympathy, the Bush Administration has remained icily detached from anything to do with him. Rushdie's hope is that Clinton will take his case seriously as a human-rights issue and put American pressure on Iran to get the *fatwa* lifted. "The most important thing of all in my mind is to get this onto the American agenda," Rushdie said the other day in a telephone call from London, where he lives at a secret address and is in the protective custody of Scotland Yard's Special Branch. American PEN has already helped, by getting a group of writers to sign an open letter to Mr. Clinton about Rushdie, which will be published in the *New York Review of Books* next month.

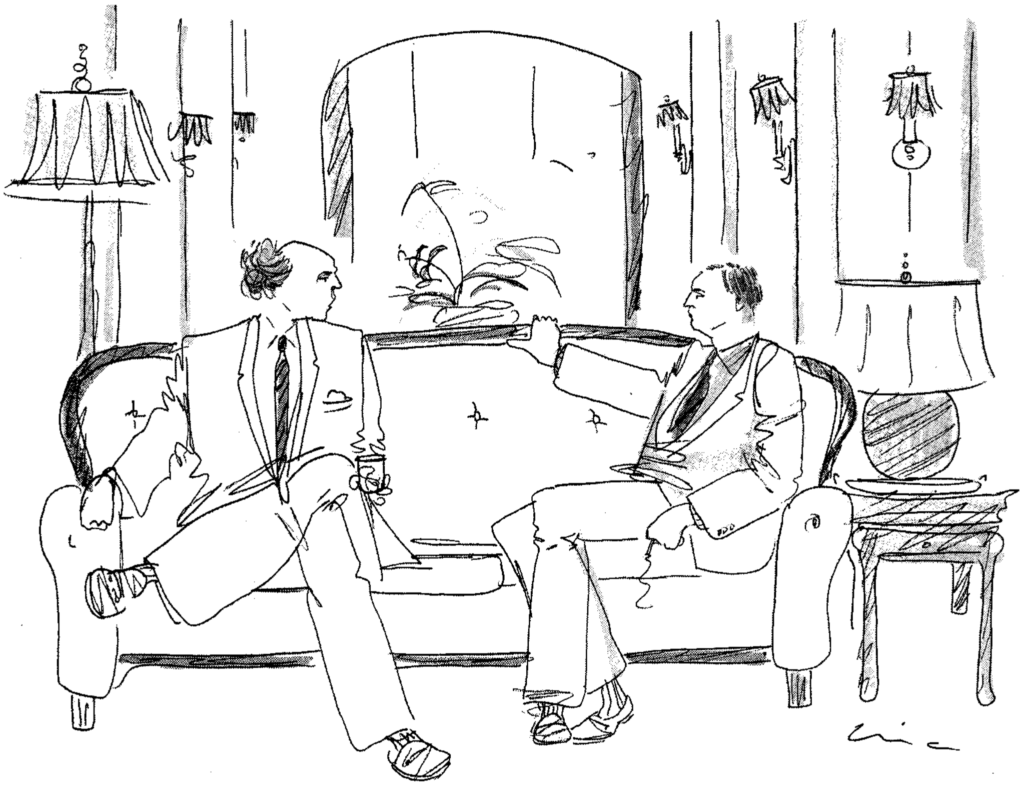
In his efforts to secure release from his nightmare, Rushdie has tried everything from publicly attacking the British Foreign Office for its inaction to what he recently called his “embarrassing flirtation with Islam”—his announcement in December, 1990, that he had become a Muslim. Now he rests all his hopes on international diplomacy. During the past year, he has left Britain several times to visit countries that could be helpful to his cause. He came to the United States last March and, though he was shunned by the Administration, was sympathetically received by several leading members of Congress, including Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan, who publicly pledged his support. Rushdie also visited Canada and the Scandinavian countries, which are famous for their interest in human-rights issues, and Germany, which has close economic ties with Iran. He thinks he has made progress in all these places. He believes now that the *fatwa* will be lifted only if Iran can be persuaded that “the degree of concern about this issue is getting in the way of better relations with the West.”

In contrast to other victims of human-rights violations, Rushdie has been generally treated with little sympathy. Those in Britain who resent the high cost of protecting him and the unrest his case has fomented in the country's Muslim communities tend to blame him for his own misfortune. They see “The Satanic Verses” as a deliberate act of provocation of Muslims by a writer of Muslim background, who must have known how much offense his novel would cause. Rushdie's natural belligerence and his tendency to appear arrogant and self-obsessed have been seized upon and exaggerated by his critics in order to portray him as unworthy of more than token support. Consequently, he and his friends have reacted with alarm to an article by Philip Weiss in the current issue of *Esquire*, which by highlighting such criticisms leaves an impression of Rushdie as an unstable and unsavory character. Referring to an interview given in 1991 to the London Sunday *Times* by Rushdie's estranged American wife, Marianne Wiggins, who now lives in New York, and from whom Rushdie is seeking a divorce, Mr. Weiss credited her with “a bracing American openness” in saying, “He's not the bravest man in the world, but will do anything to save his life.” Bracing and open this remark may have been, but hardly kind.

Rushdie and some of his friends who are also quoted in Mr. Weiss's article claim that it contains significant “falsifications,” most notably an opening anecdote that has Rushdie, during a visit to Denmark last summer, losing his temper in a van with his Danish security guards and yelling at them, “Don't fool around with me. Get the hell out. I don't want you. I can do without you, and I can take the fucking risk!” The story is attributed to Rushdie's host on that occasion, the poet and journalist Niels Barfoed, who heads Danish PEN, but Mr. Barfoed now states that the incident never took place. Mr. Barfoed says that he described to Mr. Weiss how he himself might have reacted if he had been subjected to the kind of security restrictions imposed on Rushdie, and suggests that Mr. Weiss may have wrongly understood him to be describing Rushdie's behavior, which had been impeccable. Mr. Barfoed has written to *Esquire* complaining about the error.

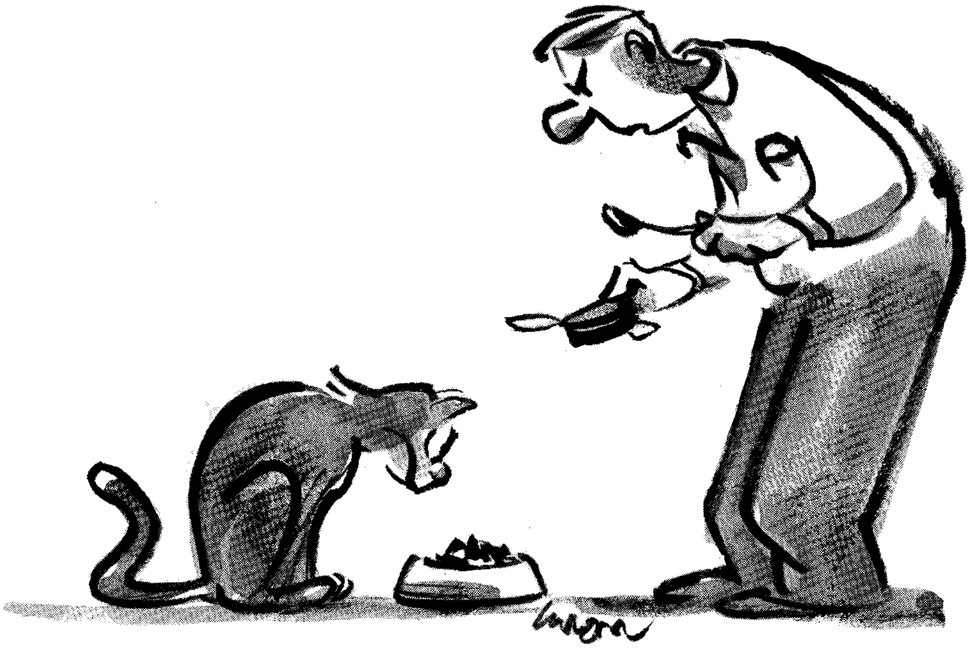
The story, Rushdie says, could jeopardize his chances to make other visits abroad. “The trips I've been trying to undertake depend to a very large extent on the local security forces. If I'm described as this wild man who screams at everyone, this might be difficult. You can't imagine how difficult these things are to organize. They require lots of people working flat out for weeks. They're not trips undertaken for my health. They're to get governments to take an interest in my cause.”

Rushdie is also worried that stories about his now quite frequent sallies into the outside world could give the impression that the risk to his life has diminished. Not so. The two-to-three-million-dollar bounty originally promised by the Fifteen Khordad Foundation, an Iranian “charity,” to anyone carrying out Khomeini's execution order has been increased from time to time—most recently (by an undisclosed amount) after he visited Germany last October. And he says he has been told by



“What a drag. Just when I felt I was getting to know Richard Darman, he's gone.”

British officials that "the degree of threat to me is still greater than to any other person the Special Branch protects—greater even than to, say, John Major, or any other British minister who is a target of the I.R.A."



"The phrase you're groping for is 'Thank you.' "

SCOTTISH HORRORS

THE preparation of a catalogue, whether of books, pictures, or other works of art, provides writers—most of them unknown to fame—with an opportunity to convey a great deal of information on an agreeably small scale. It is lapidary work, in which a certain touch of wit is permitted to enliven the solemn face of scholarship. This welcome characteristic is to be found in a catalogue of a current exhibition at that venerable hideaway of bibliophiles the Grolier Club, on East Sixtieth Street. The exhibition, open to the public daily, except Sundays, from ten to five, is called "Voices of Scotland," and it embraces Scottish books and manuscripts ranging in time from the dawn of the fifteenth century to the twilight of the twentieth. The curator of the show and author of its catalogue is a member of the club, Janet Saint Germain. A native New Yorker, born within a block or so of where she lives today, in the East Seventies, Mrs. Saint Germain is of Scottish descent and possesses what the Scots call a pawky sense of humor. She began her career as a collector of Scottish literary materials at the age of eight, when a family friend gave her a copy of the poems of Robert Burns.

Valorously but in vain, many generations of Scots struggled to remain independent of England, and as a result much of Scotland's early history consists of wars, executions, and the devastation of its countryside. Mrs. Saint Germain writes of these terrible events with a stylish equanimity. Of the author of a sixteenth-century catechism, John Hamilton, she notes that he was "a natural son of the first Earl of Arran" and "became a Benedictine monk when still a boy," and goes on to inform us, "Hamilton was an avid supporter of Mary, Queen of Scots. . . . The Queen's troubles were his and Hamilton was accused of complicity in the murders of the Queen's Consort, Henry, Lord Darnley (1545-1567), and of Mary's half-brother, James Stewart (1531?-1570), the Earl of Moray and Regent for Mary's young son James." Mrs. Saint Germain then dispatches Hamilton in a succinctly lyrical sentence: "The Cardinal was hanged in his episcopal vestments at Stirling."

With equal grace and coolness, Mrs. Saint Germain writes of Archibald Campbell, Marquis of Argyll, that when a "scheme to recall Charles II failed, Argyll . . . suffered political and financial ruin" and "was beheaded in Edinburgh and his head was placed on the same spike at Tolbooth Prison that had once held the head of his great enemy Montrose." On a more cheerful level, she reports of Sir Thomas Urquhart of Cromarty, the celebrated translator of Rabelais, that he "is said to have died laughing in 1660 upon hearing the news of the restoration of Charles II." By the eighteenth century, wars and beheadings had given way to brutal literary Donnybrooks. Dr. Johnson, who so famously disliked Scots, accused the Scottish poet James Macpherson of forging the poems of an ancient bard named Ossian, of which Macpherson claimed to be merely the translator. Macpherson, though he was never able to produce any originals, nevertheless had what amounted to the last word, for, Mrs. Saint Germain tells us, "at his own request and expense he was buried in Westminster Abbey."

That such a small and perennially impoverished country has contrived to produce so many writers and philosophers—among them Boswell, Burns, Scott, Adam Smith, David Hume, Carlyle, Stevenson, and Barrie—can be explained in part by the Scots' belief in education. "In the beginning was the Word," the Bible says, and to the Scots words are sacred not only in a religious sense but in a literary sense as well. Nothing could more impressively convey the high place that books have always held in Scotland than a passage from a shapely little volume that Mrs. Saint Germain has put on display at the Grolier. Entitled "Instructions to a Son" and published in 1689, it was written by that Marquis of Argyll whose head was placed on a spike at Tolbooth Prison. He wrote the book while he was in prison awaiting execution, and it was characteristically Scottish of him to have taken the trouble at that desperate moment of his life to urge his son, "Think no cost too much in purchasing rare Books; next to that of acquiring good Friends I look upon this purchase; but buy them not to lay by, or to grace your library, with the name of such a Manuscript, or such a singular piece, but read, revolve him, and lay him up in your memory where he will be far the better Ornament." ♦

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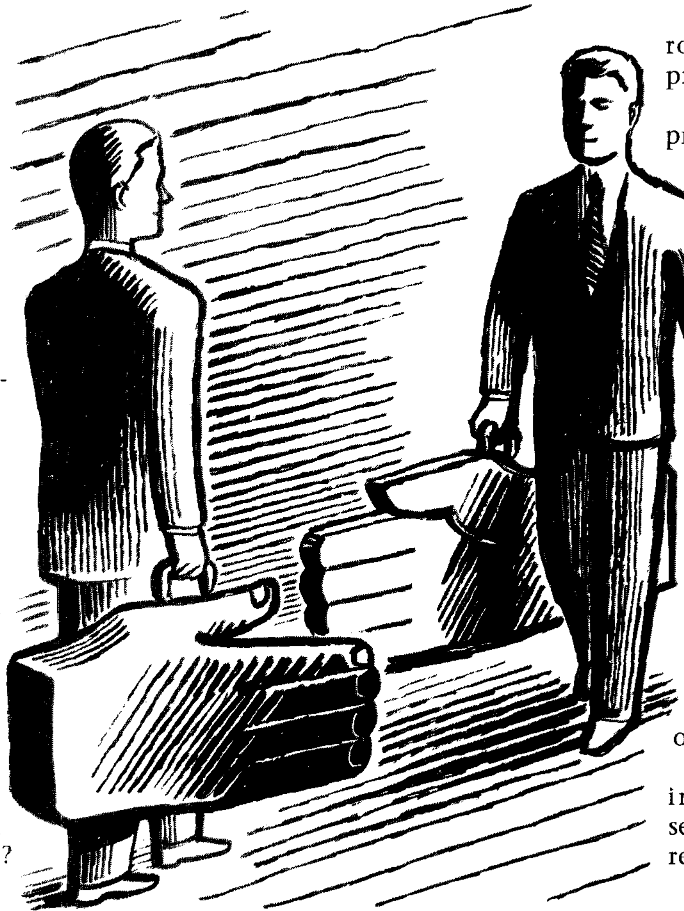

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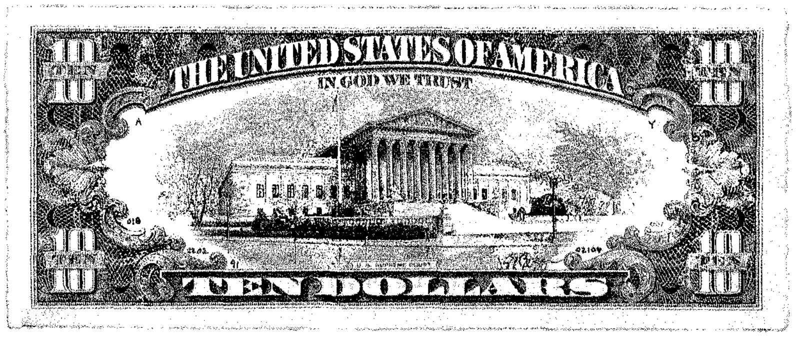
ONWARD AND UPWARD WITH THE ARTS

MONEY CHANGES EVERYTHING

J. S. G. Boggs is upping the artistic ante with his mischievous renditions of paper currency, and the feds are extremely upset.

BY LAWRENCE WESCHLER



"Project: Pittsburgh": Part of Boggs's cool million.

JSG BOGGS

OH, no. What kind of mess has Boggs got himself (and the rest of us) into this time?

Readers will perhaps remember Mr. Boggs from the Profile I did of him, which first appeared in these pages precisely five years ago this week: J. S. G. Boggs, to be exact, the young artist whose principal métier appeared to consist of drawing near-exact single-side renditions of various national currencies and then going out and "spending" those drawings—that is, persuading merchants to accept them knowingly, at face value, in lieu of cash, as payment for a wide variety of goods and services, a trick that at the time of my original article he'd managed to pull off to the tune of more than thirty-five thousand dollars' worth of transactions in just two years. Although many collectors were eager to own Boggs's drawings, he made it a rule never to sell them; he only spent them. He would, however, occasionally sell collectors the receipt and the change from a given transaction (at a considerable markup), which would enable the collectors to track down the recently spent drawing and attempt to purchase it.

Boggs's was a comedy of compounding value, for such were the arcane realities of the art market that the entire concatenation of objects surrounding any given transaction—the drawing, the item purchased, the receipt, the change, the original "model" of the bill on which the drawing was based—once documented and framed and offered up for auction, invariably and quite mysteriously sold for considerably more than the sum of the component parts. This comedy, however, generally failed to amuse the national banks and treasury police of the various countries in which Boggs chose to enact his elaborate performances, and he was regularly hauled in on a variety of counterfeiting charges, all of which he righteously contested—until now with an unbroken string of successes. In 1987, for example, a British jury took only ten minutes to buck the presiding judge's express instructions that Boggs be found guilty of "reproducing" Bank of England notes. Two years later, an Australian court not only found Boggs not guilty of similar charges but ordered that he be awarded more than twenty thousand dollars as compensation for all his trouble. And in 1991 the United States Attorney for the Wyoming District, who'd begun an investigation of Boggs's transactions, ultimately decided not to participate in what he called "the Boggs publicity game." The Secret Service (our country's treasury police) did, however, retain fifteen of Bogg's bills from that investigation.

Each of these run-ins with the law appears to have only further emboldened Boggs, provoking him to make ever more daring forays into the borderland between artistic self-expression and legal constraint. Or so I came to realize the other day, when he dropped by my office here in New York to bring me up to date. (He was in town helping to prepare the way for the première of "Money Man," Philip Haas's documentary film about Boggs's activities and in particular his attempts to reclaim his Wyoming bills from the Secret Service; the movie will begin a two-week run January 13th at Film Forum.) In many ways, these have been an immensely successful five years for Mr. Boggs. To date he has "spent" well over two hundred and fifty thousand dollars of his bills; he has enjoyed major gallery shows and a touring museum exhibition (entitled "Smart Money"); and, perhaps most improbable, for the past twenty months he has been comfortably ensconced as the Fellow of Art and Ethics at the Center for the Advancement of Applied Ethics of Pittsburgh's Carnegie Mellon University.

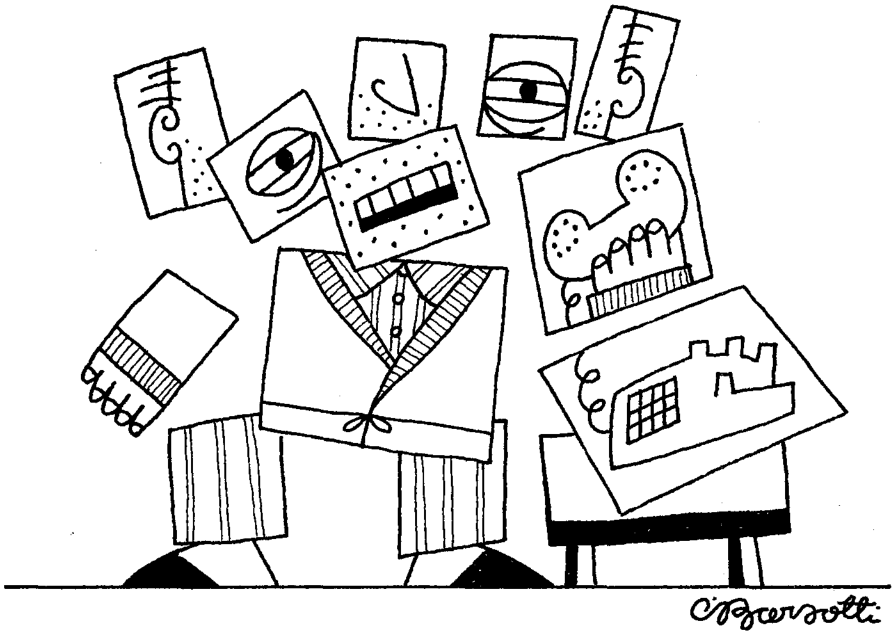
But these have also been years—at least, to hear him tell it—of endless churning. "Believe me, I've tried to kick this habit," he says. "I'll resolutely start out on some new tangent—a series of abstract canvases, for example—but then somebody always comes along and asks me something like 'Well, what do you think that painting's worth?' and I find myself being drawn right back in. Because what does anybody mean by 'worth'? And how's that different from 'value'? And what, precisely, is it that one values in value? What is good value? The questions lead me on, and before you know it I'm right back in that hall of mirrors, with the mirrored door clicking shut behind me."

Short of escaping the hall altogether, he has endeavored to give each new foray a clean, fresh edge—an edge that invariably seems to bring him closer to The Edge. Thus, having begun by trading hand-drawn renditions of bills, he took to wondering, Why not attempt to traffic in multiples of various sorts, initially in lithographs (would people accept those?) and then in engravings (would those get him in trouble?) and, finally, in simple photocopies? People did keep accepting them—by no means everyone, but enough people to keep things interesting—and treasury police all over the world grew more and more nervous.

For a long time, I had thought of Boggs as something of a Socratic artist—money's gadfly—endlessly confounding his everyday interlocutors with the precariousness of everything they took for granted about both money and art. (Why accept one kind of drawing and not the other? Why, exactly?) But, listening to him the other day, I began to realize that, if anything, his is more of a Zenonian passion. Zeno of Elea was the pre-Socratic philosopher who contrived a famous series of paradoxes around the notion of infinite regress—the idea, for example, that a runner in a race must first traverse half of the course, and then half of the remainder, and then half of the remaining remainder, and thus can never actually reach the finish line. Boggs seems to be engaged in an analogous brinkmanship with the laws of counterfeiture, converging ever more closely upon a limit he may never actually attain. (This insight reminded me, in turn, of the old story about the mathematician and the engineer who were deeply embroiled one afternoon in a dispute about Zeno's Paradox when a beautiful woman happened to walk by. The mathematician, the paradox fixed firmly in his mind, despaired of ever being able to attain her, but the engineer remained serenely confident that he'd be able to get close enough for all practical purposes. "Close enough for all practical purposes" is a territory that both Boggs and the Secret Service spend a lot of time thinking about.)

As the latest installment in his Zenonian passion, Boggs now informed me, he'd decided to raise the ante considerably. He was about to embark on what he was calling "Project: Pittsburgh." He had fashioned an entirely new edition of Boggs bills—brand-new drawings in denominations ranging from one, five, ten, and twenty dollars on up through ten thousand. He'd laser-copied a million dollars' "worth" of these bills—enough to fill a bulging briefcase. Starting on January 1st ("I like to keep things neat, everything in a single calendar year," he explained), he was going to try to spend these bills in his usual fashion, by getting people to accept them knowingly in exchange for goods or services, only this time he'd be adding a twist: he was going to encourage anyone who accepted his bills *to keep them in circulation.* This time, he was using the back side of the bills as well: an elaborate lacework design filigreed around five empty circles. Anyone accepting a bill was to immediately press his or her thumbprint into one of the empty circles ("just like being arrested," Boggs noted, with evident satisfaction), and the bill would not be deemed to have completed its life cycle until it had changed hands five times, acquiring a full complement of five thumbprints. "I want others to share in the fascinating experience of trying to get people to accept art as value," Boggs said, with expansive generosity. "And I, in turn, want to share in my collectors' experiences of trying to track these pieces down." Be that as it may, the practical consequence of Boggs's experiment was that he was going to be creating five million dollars' worth of value out of nothing—an alchemical transformation likely to provoke the Internal Revenue Service every bit as much as the Secret Service. (He assured me that he stood ever ready to cut the I.R.S. its fair share of Boggs notes.)

Sure enough, the Secret Service has lately been showing signs of increasing agitation. Back in October, when Boggs paid a courtesy call on the local Pittsburgh Secret Service offices (he always tries to keep the local constabularies apprised of his plans, precisely so that there can be no subsequent imputation of chicanery), they confiscated copies of his "Smart Money" catalogue and a collection of mine which included the Profile of him—he'd brought them along as evidence of his art-world bona fides—summarily declaring the books themselves contraband. And then, on the morning of December 2nd, a few days after a detailed exposition of his plans ran in a Pittsburgh alternative newspaper, Boggs looked up from the dashboard of his beat-up Nissan pickup to find himself surrounded by flashing lights and officers waving badges and ordering him out of the truck. "Four Secret Service agents," he subsequently told me, "two Pittsburgh police, three search warrants—one for my person, one for my home and studio, and one for my Carnegie Mellon office." The agents escorted Boggs back to his apartment, and



"No, really, I've been up for hours."

proceeded to search. "They just tossed the place like so much salad," Boggs recalls. "They emptied file cabinets, scattering the contents all over the floor, upended drawers, accidentally intentionally broke my glasses—dropped them on the floor and then ostentatiously stepped on them. They were confiscating drawings left and right, and receipts, too—seven years' worth of work. I have a file detailing the appearances of money in ads and other sorts of media—they took that. I asked, What do you need that for? 'Evidence of intent.' I said, What do you want the receipts for? They're of no use to you and to me they're irreplaceable. 'Evidence of transactions.' It was incredibly humiliating—there was this terrible, all-permeating feeling of violation." Boggs was shaking as he told me this and seemed genuinely upset. "They left the place a shambles. It'll take me months to even figure out everything they took—let alone to locate anything they left behind."

Afterward, the raiding party moved on to his Carnegie Mellon office and joined up with a half-dozen other agents already on the scene. " 'Where are you hiding the million dollars?' they kept demanding," Boggs says. "And, of course, I wouldn't tell them. 'You're in big trouble, buddy. Manufacturing counterfeits. Uttering counterfeits.' Uttering—that means passing them, spending them. 'You're looking at fifteen years and a five-thousand-dollar fine on each count. And you stand a good chance of getting the maximum, because you've been duly warned. Now, where's the million dollars?' I told them they knew they didn't have a case or else they'd arrest me right then and there. 'Arrest me or leave me alone,' I said. And, as for the million, they could come to a public performance, which had already been announced for that Saturday, in which I'd be participating with several other Pittsburgh artists and where I'd be displaying the work for the first time. They'd be able to see it like everybody else."

The Secret Service didn't arrest Boggs that afternoon at Carnegie Mellon, but they did confiscate further batches of evidence. Nor did they arrest him that Saturday night, when, before more than four hundred art fans ("The place was pulsing, like a heart"), he indeed displayed his bulging briefcase containing the million in Boggs bills. He taunted the agents he recognized in the audience, saying, "Here it is. Go ahead, arrest me. O.K., you're self-conscious. I'll wait for you outside." He did. Nobody came by.

It's not entirely clear what the Secret Service and the United States Attorney for the Pittsburgh District are up to in this latest skirmish with Boggs. The signals they've been sending are mixed (and neither office has been willing to comment to the press on what they are characterizing as merely an ongoing investigation into possible violations of Section 474, among others, of Title 18 of the Federal Criminal Code and Rules, which expressly forbids making "obligations" in the "similitude" of any United States currency). On the one hand, it seems they may be gearing up for a major trial, figuring that Boggs has finally gone too far, and that this time they will have an easier time convincing a jury that they're simply trying to protect some future innocent shopkeeper, someone not unlike themselves, from unwittingly getting saddled with bum paper. Even if Boggs himself is going to be scrupulous in abiding by his rules of transparent disclosure, they may intend to argue, who is to say how the third or fourth transactor down the chain might behave?

Or, on the other hand, they may now have embarked on a preëmptive war of attrition. "What's it going to take, Boggs, to make you stop?" Boggs claims that one of the agents kept yelling at him during their December run-in. "Are we going to have to come by and do this to you every other week?" If that's their plan, they may be daring him to sue them to get them to stop, both sides knowing that in such a suit his odds would be decidedly narrower: he would be the plaintiff and they the defendants; in all likelihood, they could confine the case to a judge without a jury; all they'd have to prove would be that they had probable cause to engage in the ongoing investigation of which these confiscations were a necessary part. In any event, the entire ordeal would end up costing Boggs a fortune in real money he doesn't have. (Some attorneys he's consulted have estimated upward of a hundred thousand dollars.) If that's their scheme, it raises some First Amendment issues, not the least being the question of prior censorship.

"What's driving them so crazy?" Boggs asked me forlornly—and somewhat rhetorically—the other day. "I mean, it can't just be the alleged counterfeiting. A million dollars, even five million—that's less than nothing in the full money stream. No, it can't be just that. It must be the way these bills of mine subvert the whole system, calling into question the very credibility of the country's entire currency. Because what's it all based on? Nothing. Sheer faith." He reached into his satchel and pulled out one of his Pittsburgh bills. "Look here." He showed me the back side with its five empty circles, each awaiting its thumbprint. "I based that design on this bill here." He pulled out a photocopy of an 1886 five-dollar silver certificate. "In the old days, paper was sheer mystification—nobody trusted it. So that, as in this case here, they literally portrayed the five silver-dollar coins for which you could redeem the paper *on the bill itself*. And you used to be able to do precisely that—to cash in the paper for specie. Not anymore, of course. There's a great old cartoon by Thomas Nast from around that same time which shows a gold coin standing on its side, with an arrow pointing to it saying 'This is specie,' and the coin is casting a faint shadow, with an arrow pointing to it saying 'And this is paper money.' Now that paper has lost even its gold backing, it has become the shadow of a shadow."

Another Zenonian regress—Bogg's art turned out to be mirroring, from its own side, the infinite regress of value inherent in paper money itself.

Boggs turned the bill over, revealing a near-perfect rendition of the back of an ordinary ten-dollar bill, with its magisterial representation of the U.S. Supreme Court Building. "Terrific likeness," I said.

"Think so?" Boggs smiled.

He reached into his wallet and extracted a real ten-dollar bill, on the back of which was a representation of the U.S. Treasury Building.

Nice trick. I asked him which denomination the Supreme Court actually graced, and he answered, "None. I made it up. It's my own fantasy."

Maybe, it subsequently occurred to me, he'd put the Supreme Court there in anticipation of a perhaps not so distant day when the full panoply of Boggsian perplexes will be landing squarely at its steps.

In the meantime, Boggs has gone back to Pittsburgh and started spending his new bills. On January 1st, he passed six prints, "worth" a total of twelve hundred and thirty dollars. One of them, a crisp Supreme Court ten—clearly a bill in a hurry—has already changed hands three times. ♦

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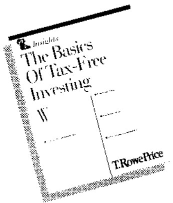

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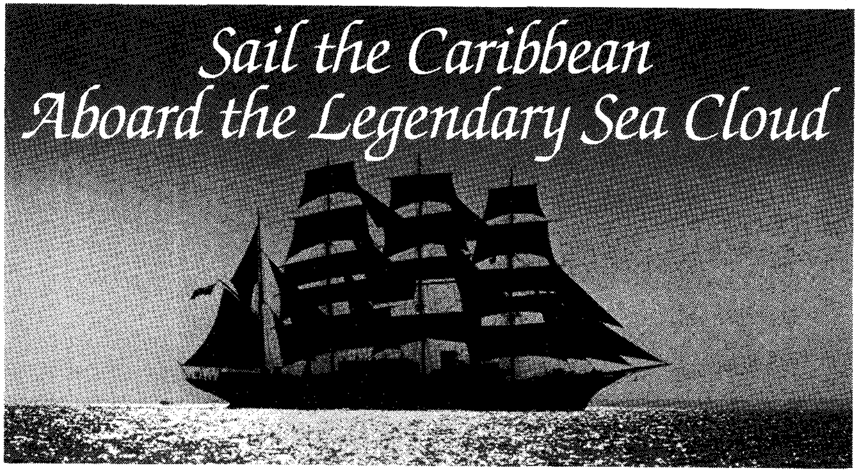

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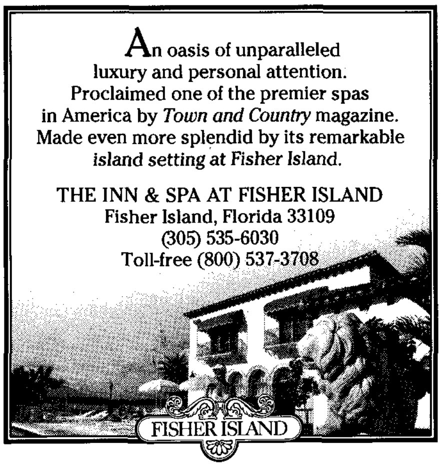
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BUSINESS

THE BATTLE OF THE BAILOUT

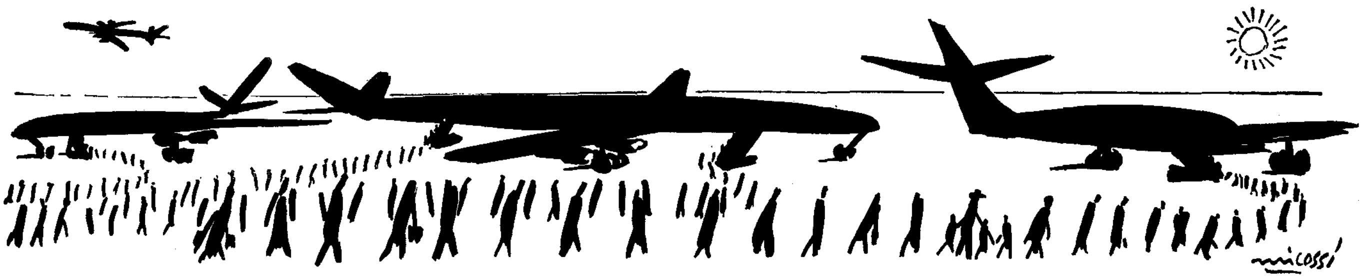
The Big Three screamed foul at the proposed British Airways-USAir deal, but have America's airlines left themselves any alternative for survival?

BY JOHN NEWHOUSE

In the airline business, as in a Trollope novel, things are often not what they seem. Take the persistent but unsuccessful efforts of British Airways to acquire an American base. The typical air traveller could well be excused for finding nothing wrong with allowing B.A., the major airline of a friendly country, to invest seven hundred and fifty million dollars in USAir, which without an infusion of funds on this scale would before long have to cease operations. No one wants to see the company go under except its competitors. So when British Airways and USAir announced last July 21st—just after the Democrats' Convention and before the Republicans'—that they intended to join forces, prospects for the deal looked good. Indeed, Andrew H. Card, Jr., the Secretary of Transportation, who was charged with deciding whether to approve it, at first showed every sign of preparing to do so. By late September, though, a dark cloud was gathering. The Big Three, as American Airlines, United Airlines, and Delta Air Lines are known, had banded together to block the bailout of USAir. They were joined by Federal Express, with the group then becoming known, in Card's phrase, as the Fat Four. The only thing that tied them together, it seemed, was their concern about ridding the airways of a financially exposed competitor. However, these fiercely competitive behemoths did work up a substantive case against the merger in the light of the apparent public interest, which gradually acquired a weight equal to that of the case for going forward. The argument of the Fat Four, stated briefly, was that B.A., if it should be allowed to absorb USAir, would take its place with them as a preëminent domestic carrier, but one that would possess heavy and unique advantages, thanks to its global reach. The question for the Bush Administration, then, was whether USAir might have to join the lengthening list of airline fatalities or be allowed to merge with B.A. and thereby threaten the well-being of the Big Three—the backbone of America's airline industry. Where did the consumer's interest lie? And was it the same as the national interest? The decision would have been a tough call in any year, but with the issue turning up in the Presidential campaign, as it did, Card was caught between the upper and the nether millstones.

USAir is America's sixth-largest carrier; not long ago, it was one of the most successful and least vulnerable. With several big carriers having failed to survive their mistakes and the predaceous airline environment, the consumer's menu of choice is narrowing: the Big Three now control more than half of the domestic-air-travel market, which, incidentally, amounts to nearly half of the world market. Also, airlines are big employers—in some urban areas, the biggest. Any major carrier has one or more hub airports, or gateways—engines of economic growth. An airline's troubles are felt in many places, including Washington. No Administration wants to be confronted with an airline carcass on its watch. The Bush Administration has had two—Eastern Airlines and Pan American World Airways. And right now two more—Continental Airlines and Trans World Airlines—are in Chapter 11, and Northwest Airlines has the staggers.

Card had been in the job for about five months when the struggle began. Before that, he had been deputy chief of staff at the White House. Like John Sununu, his former boss there, Card is an engineer by training, but for many years he was a Republican politician in Massachusetts, having served in the State Legislature and once run for governor. He was less than ideally equipped, or prepared, to handle the B.A.–USAir proposal, given the large gray area it seemed to open up. Politics added to the uncertainties: with the Presidential cam-



paign moving into the serious stage, Card and the White House were suddenly confronted by a well-organized, multistate coalition that B.A. and USAir had put together seemingly overnight. USAir's major hubs are Pittsburgh and Charlotte; others are Philadelphia, Baltimore, and Indianapolis. The airline is also a strong presence in Boston, at New York's LaGuardia airport, and in some other places. The legislatures in all or most of the states concerned had been well prepared. Some of the governors, including New York's Mario Cuomo, got involved, and so did influential members of Congress. Howard Baker, the former Republican leader of the Senate, was hired to represent USAir and British Airways. Several of Washington's most high-powered lobbyists—some with ties to Republicans, others to Democrats—were recruited for the occasion. Pennsylvania was expected to be a major battleground state; so was North Carolina. The Bush campaign hoped then to be at least competitive in several of USAir's other states. Missouri was also a factor, because USAir was apparently interested in buying up the T.W.A. route structure: St. Louis is T.W.A.'s major hub, and the state is determined to sustain the city's role as host to a large airline. Various Missouri political figures, including John C. Danforth, a prominent Republican senator and a force in airline matters, were working USAir's corner.

The battle pitted the craftiest and most resourceful of the airline industry's high-stakes players against one another. Britain's campaign was led by Lord King, the chairman of B.A., and Sir Colin Marshall, its chief executive. King, who is expected to retire this year, is one of the Conservative Party's bare-knuckled infighters. Marshall, who will replace him as chairman, has a less aggressive, less freewheeling style but is no less a competitor. Marshall used to be in the car-rental business; he worked for both Hertz and Avis, and for a time was Avis's C.E.O. He and King are equally determined to make B.A. the No. 1 global airline. Leading the charge against the deal was Robert L. Crandall, the chairman and chief executive officer of American Airlines. The highest-decibel rhetoric was Crandall's; he is the one who drew in the TV networks and the other news media.

To survive, any major carrier must now be able to compete in the world market, where serious growth lies. B.A. is currently one of the most prosperous and altogether the most successful of the world's big airlines. (It is rivalled in those respects only by Singapore Airlines and Cathay Pacific.) It was fully privatized six years ago, and is today a highly visible success story in a distressed country that is having few successes. And B.A. makes its money not by flying people to Prestwick but, rather, to and from places like New Delhi, Johannesburg, and Chicago. The secret of B.A.'s success, quite simply, is its dominant position at Heathrow Airport, the largest of the world's international hubs: more flights depart from Heathrow to North America, Asia, Africa, and Continental Europe than from any other airport, and B.A.'s flights account for about thirty-five per cent of this traffic. B.A. intends to build on its premier position among the international carriers in order to acquire a dominant and unassailable position in the world market. Anything less, B.A. feels, would cause it to lose out eventually to the Big Three, as their own wings continue to spread beyond America's shores.

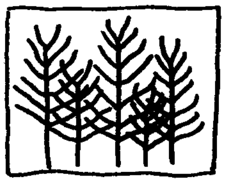
The major money-makers are the long-haul routes in the Pacific—most notably those out of Tokyo—together with the North Atlantic flyways that link Heathrow to America's hub cities. The latter routes are especially lucrative, because of the sheer volume of the American air-travel market. B.A. will not reach its lofty goals unless it acquires outright control of a big American airline, or otherwise merges its operations with those of such an airline. "B.A. wants to be the first and foremost global carrier," an official at the Department of Transportation (D.O.T.) said recently. "USAir is affordable and is not yet in Chapter 11."

B.A. professed to see some risks in the investment. Seven hundred and fifty million dollars would buy forty-four per cent of the ownership of USAir, but only twenty-one per cent of that share would constitute voting stock. B.A. could have no more than four of the sixteen members of the new USAir board of directors, because under United States law a foreign entity cannot control more than twenty-five per cent of the voting stock of a domestic airline. USAir was "hemorrhaging money," B.A. officials liked to say when they described the risk they saw in acquiring nearly half of USAir's financial exposure without benefit of effective control. "You make one or two mistakes in this business and you are out of it," a closely involved participant in the affair observed. USAir has made at least three mistakes, two of which involved botched takeovers of other airlines. In April of 1988, it merged with Pacific Southwest Airways, whose large and devoted patronage had grown accustomed to the carrier's breezy, informal style. P.S.A.'s planes had smiles painted under the cockpit windows. Flight attendants wore hot pants and even sang and danced with passengers. USAir wiped off the smiles and imposed its starchier corporate culture on P.S.A., much of whose passenger base defected to competitor airlines. USAir wrote off all or most of its heavy investment in P.S.A. In 1989, USAir merged with Piedmont Airlines, a highly successful Southern carrier with a distinctly relaxed Southern style. USAir changed that, too, again to its heavy cost. USAir's third mistake was waiting too long to develop a footing in the international market.

Over the past five years, USAir has

invested more than five billion dollars in its own declining fortunes. The embattled United States airline industry has lost seven billion dollars over the past two years and is now astride seventy-five billion dollars of debt. The debt-equity ratio within the industry is about seventy-five per cent. Net cash flows are covering just twenty-five to thirty-five per cent of capital expenditures, and the financial leverage on some carriers is so strong that they cannot cover fixed costs. Nearly six hundred and fifty idle airliners are parked in the Arizona desert. Ten years ago, Northwest, the fourth-largest American airline, had no debt. Now it owes four billion dollars, and in November it was reported to be considering selling off precious landing and takeoff slots at Chicago's O'Hare Airport. Just a few weeks ago, Northwest cancelled or deferred the delivery of new airplanes worth six billion two hundred million dollars. The Big Three are among the money losers, despite their dominant market position. The A.M.R. Corporation, the parent of American Airlines, has lost about three hundred million dollars over the past two years, and plans to cut its capital spending by half during the next four. Banks, insurance companies, and pension funds are shunning the airlines, and this means that foreign carriers, most of them government-owned, are becoming lenders of last resort.

Not long before the decision on the B.A.-USAir deal was made, late in December, I saw Lord King; he asked rhetorically, as he doubtless has in many conversations, "What will happen to America's airline stocks if this deal does not go through? Excluding outside investment will be a bad signal to all investors." King and his colleagues pointedly note the absence of investors in this country who are willing to rescue USAir.



Much, or most, of the airline industry's misery is self-inflicted. In good times, carriers buy too many new airplanes, often larger ones. The new equipment permits, if not dictates, expanded service, which, in turn, increases competition: more airlines battling one another on more routes. In bad times, of course, the mixture of excess capacity and a shrinking market takes a heavy toll. Still, the airlines seem to learn nothing from these self-renewing cycles. However grim their situation becomes, they continue competing lustily for the largest possible share of the market—as if market share were an end in itself, having nothing to do with financial stability, let alone profitability.

No topic, including agriculture, generates a more belligerent tactical approach than air-service negotiations; for a time, bureaucracies adopt the brawling, *guerre à outrance* style that is wholly natural to big airlines when they become extensions of the flag. A typical air-services agreement between two countries will limit the number of airlines that may operate between the cities of those countries and will also limit the number of flights. The agreements, by and large, are unnecessarily restrictive. Aside from broadcasting, probably no other industry has comparably narrow restrictions on foreign ownership and on where companies can operate. In America, this restrictive attitude stems from outdated notions about airlines as instruments of national security—ferrying troops to combat zones, for instance. Other countries are concerned with protecting state-owned airlines. It's true that in Washington, as in London and other capitals, one hears about the need for fewer restrictions—for "open skies." Most of the talk is unserious, however, partly because no two parties can agree on just how open an open-skies regime should be; many big airlines will support an open-skies policy provided that they can be sure it won't come about or that, whatever happens, it won't affect them.

"The carriers are overwhelmingly protectionist," says a senior American diplomat who has dealt with them closely and often. "Open-skies talk is disingenuous. They would all have a hundred reasons to oppose open skies if it reached a serious stage."

Foreign airlines would like permission to pick up and unload passengers within the American market. And, in an increasingly globalized economy, it is hard to see why carriers should be denied this right, which is called cabotage. But what every big foreign airline really craves is the freedom to buy control of a major American airline. This right of "inward investment," as foreign control is euphemistically known, would provide far greater and more reliable access to the lush American market than cabotage. Either cabotage or foreign control, though, would require changes in domestic law. And Congress, if it should be asked, would refuse to amend existing law unless other major players, like Britain, France, Germany, and Japan, extended reciprocal benefits to the United States. What Washington seeks is improved and reliable access for American carriers to these markets—especially London—and, more important, "beyond rights": the freedom to land in London or Paris, say, and carry passengers onward to Asian or African destinations instead of turning around and heading home. Washington sees the foreign competition as a clump of mostly state-owned airlines controlled by bureaucrats who fix prices in unavailing efforts to control costs and avoid heavy losses. Other countries see Washington as wishing to extend its carriers' control of the bountiful, heavily protected American market to the world beyond.

Except for Britain, which is a special case, the United States has held the upper hand in the big foreign-airline markets. After the Second World War, only America and, to some extent, Britain had much in the way of air services. And Washington more or less dictated the terms of bilateral agreements that gave American carriers what now strike other countries as unacceptably large shares of the various markets.

Ideally, those countries would like highly restrictive—protectionist—arrangements, of the kind that Washington, to its vast regret, made with Britain in 1977; known as Bermuda II, the agreement imposed narrow limits on American access to the British market. For example, Bermuda II allowed only two American carriers—Pan Am and T.W.A.—to fly into Heathrow, Britain's honeypot. The agreement also required joint approval of fare structures, and that meant that Britain can and does require higher fares between American gateways and London than between those same gateways and other European cities. "Bermuda II is a ludicrously heavy document and a great embarrassment," a senior American diplomat says. It is embarrassing partly because it coincided with the start of airline deregulation in America—a move that was aimed at promoting competition and a less restrictive environment.

About two years ago, with Pan Am heading toward bankruptcy court and T.W.A also in a free-fall, Bermuda II became black comedy. If, as was widely expected, these wobbliest of United States carriers collapsed, America's access to Heathrow could go with them. United Airlines had made a provisional deal to buy Pan Am's rights to fly between Heathrow and five American cities—New York, Washington, San Francisco, Los Angeles, and Seattle—for four hundred million dollars. American Airlines was trying to buy T.W.A.'s gateways to Heathrow, and, after a long and episodic negotiation, got the rights to three of them—New York, Boston, and Los Angeles—for four hundred and forty-five million. First, however, Bermuda II would have to be amended, for Britain was being asked to allow two weak sisters, neither of which was much competition for B.A., to be replaced at Heathrow by America's two strongest carriers.

The so-called Heathrow negotiation was generally agreed to have reached a new high (or low) in nastiness. Washington was over a barrel. Pan Am needed the infusion of cash that United was putting up in return for access to Heathrow. The Bush Administration wanted no part in Pan Am's collapse or in T.W.A.'s further fall; T.W.A.'s need of American's cash was rather less urgent but was also critical. And there was, of course, the larger interest—helping what were by then the two biggest and most competitive United States carriers to strengthen their positions in the tough world market.

In March of 1991, after many months of arduous negotiation, a deal was struck. American and United would gain the highly coveted access to Heathrow, but at a heavy price. Britain's negotiators could and did extract numerous concessions, one of which imposed what is called a cap on capacity, which limited the number of United and American flights into and out of Heathrow to no more than the number that Pan Am and T.W.A. then had. Another concession, potentially more serious, offered British carriers the right to enter into "code sharing" arrangements in the United States. Code sharing, a vastly useful marketing tool, would allow B.A., for example, to have its logo and connecting flights displayed on computerized reservation screens across America. Thus B.A. would be able to obtain revenue from whatever connecting flights its passengers might make on American carriers. But far more sinister, in the eyes of America's Big Three, was the horrid logic of code sharing: In the worst case, B.A. would merge with a major American carrier, and together they would become a single airline offering seamless service from numerous points in America to numerous far-flung points on other continents. An international flight on this blended airline might be non-stop or might involve one or two stops, and the passenger on a multi-leg flight would be assured of very good connections, of not having to change terminals, and of reliable—or, at least, less dicey—baggage handling.

The deal between B.A. and USAir, if it had been approved, would have been the realization of the Big Three's worst-case scenario. A traveller in Sacramento or Seattle who wanted to go to Bombay or Singapore or any of B.A.'s other remote destinations would have benefitted from "on line" service. "Consumers prefer by almost a four-to-one margin to fly a single carrier on multi-leg trips," according to one of various presentations made by American Airlines in opposing the deal. "Thus on-line carriers enjoy a profound competitive advantage. Under the proposed transaction, British Airways would enjoy the unique right to create a single on-line entity consisting of USAir and itself in 12,000 global markets—on 7,500 of which no other U.S. carrier is allowed to compete."

In a conversation that I had with Crandall about a month before the decision, he complained bitterly and at length about the code-sharing proposal. He took as a random example a flight from San Diego to Nairobi. "The U.S.-to-London portion of that flight would now be on American," he observed. "But if the deal is approved you will do the entire trip on B.A. That is just one of those twelve thousand markets." What bothered him most, Crandall said, was the absence of reciprocity. American and United, and Delta as well, he said, could compete with the blended on-line carrier

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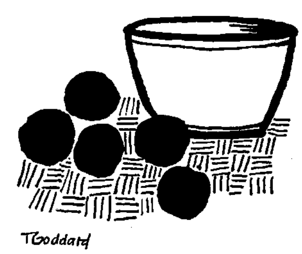
provided that they were allowed to fly beyond Heathrow to the places where B.A. goes. But only United has any beyond rights from Heathrow, and these are limited to a few cities in Germany. "We told the government not to give the British code sharing," Crandall said. "Washington said Pan Am needs the money. So code sharing was sold to Pan Am." It's true that Crandall was opposed to having his government pay a price to save Pan Am, an already doomed carrier. He told me so at the time. Still, he also wanted access to Heathrow, and all the bargaining leverage lay with the British. Just before the negotiation was concluded, Samuel K. Skinner, who was then the Secretary of Transportation, called Crandall and Stephen M. Wolf, the chairman and C.E.O. of United, and outlined what he described as the best, or least unfavorable, deal that he could get. Wolf told him to take it, but Crandall insists that he himself said, "To hell with it."

Skinner says, "I do not recall Bob Crandall's saying, 'To hell with it.' What he did say was close to what Wolf said. He did not indicate that I shouldn't take the deal."

AN airline merger, like an airline death, creates a lot of commotion and some confusion. B.A.'s proposed deal with USAir provoked perhaps the biggest bowwow of all. With Britain in the improbable role of rich petitioner, the leverage lay with the United States side. Or so it seemed. Actually, the British had things pretty much their own way in the early going. "They kept this under wraps," an official at the Department of Transportation says. "The first we heard about it was in July, just before the announcement on the twenty-first. B.A. was the moving force behind the deal."



The interested parties—Lord King and Sir Colin Marshall, along with Seth E. Schofield, USAir's C.E.O.—met with Secretary Card on July 20th. They were alerting him to what was about to happen. The following day, Card issued a brief statement noting that the two carriers "have asked us to review their innovative financial and operating agreement," and adding, "Such transactions hold the promise of competitive benefits to carriers, to their customers, and to the communities they serve. The world's airline industry is clearly moving in the direction of cross-border alliances."

A week later, on July 28th, Card created a major dustup. During the question period after a speech he had given, he said that he would not seek a quid pro quo with Britain as the price for approving the B.A.–USAir deal. With this remark, Card reversed the official United States line: yes to foreign investment in our airlines provided that there was reciprocity; that is, improved access for these carriers in the investor's market. It was a gaffe, but Card seemed to know what he was doing. He said as much to his staff, according to one official, on the day after the no-quid-pro-quo remark; and he warned the staff, this official added, not to reinterpret his remark. Nonetheless, one D.O.T. official called a member of the British team that day and advised against uncorking the champagne.

The Big Three were thrown off stride, and at first seemed unsure of what to do or say. The no-quid-pro-quo comment appalled them, and they began shouting, but not in unison. For a while, their shouts drew little notice. "Our hope was that the deal would be done by early September—well before the final stretch of the campaign," Sir Colin Marshall says. "Hurricane Andrew got in the way. Card was appointed to take the lead in the relief efforts in South Florida. And the Big Three had got themselves organized, gradually."

Around the end of September, United's Steve Wolf called Bob Crandall and Frederick W. Smith, the chairman and C.E.O. of Federal Express. Wolf proposed forming a coalition with Ronald W. Allen, Delta's C.E.O., to oppose the B.A.-USAir deal. "It was our initiative," a senior official at United says. "We are bitter competitors, but we had to join forces to fight this thing."

Actually, by late September the Big Three, or the Fat Four, had established a multistate coalition that was at least as formidable as their opposition's. In Washington, they had cranked up at least as many heavyweight lobbyists and probably more.

"For a while, USAir and B.A. had the field all to themselves," a D.O.T. official says. "The mood was pro-competition, and the deal was seen as saving USAir jobs. But when the Fat Four came together, they came out roaring. They worked the campaigns, worked the Congress and the press. The government gradually came to see the complexities and the downside of the deal."

For the B.A.–USAir coalition, the jobs issue swiftly became double-edged. USAir employs forty-nine thousand people. American employs seventy-seven thousand, United about seventy-six thousand, and Delta sixty thousand. To D.O.T. officials, it seemed as if most of the employees of each of these carriers, and their relatives as well, were phoning or writing. "We've got over a hundred thousand letters so far from both sides," a D.O.T. official told me in early November.

The issue on which Card would rule was wrapped not only in politics and government policy but also in the law on foreign ownership. What linked each of the three considerations, or seemed to, was the question of control. If the deal appeared to transfer control of USAir to B.A., Card would have to say no. Although B.A. was proposing to acquire just twenty-one per cent of the voting stock and one-fourth of the board membership, that measure of control would provide a blocking minority—the right to approve or disapprove fleet purchases, uses of capital, personnel matters, and any other decisions of importance. B.A.'s proposal did conform to the letter of statute, barely. But, according to a D.O.T. official, a harder test had to be met. "The proposal must conform to statutory and precedential law," he said. "B.A. knew it was pushing an aggressive transaction. That is perfectly understandable, given the cloud that USAir's management has been under in recent years." This official was unable to say, with the issue before Card, whether precedent ruled out the degree of control that B.A. was seeking. But quite clearly the eventual decision would tell as much about policy as it would about interpreting the statute. Would Washington require a price from the British, who were stonily ruling out a quid pro quo, just as Card himself had? And if reciprocity there had to be, how much?

In mid-September, Card, for whatever reason, reversed the openly compliant position that he had taken in late July. On September 16th, in a speech to the Wings Club, in New York, he cited the need for reciprocity in the proposed deal. The next day, he met with Sir Colin Marshall, who had come to press him for prompt approval. Marshall warned Card, according to a British diplomat, that B.A. would walk away from the deal unless Card approved it, as presented, by no later than December 24th. Card said that he would not be hurried.

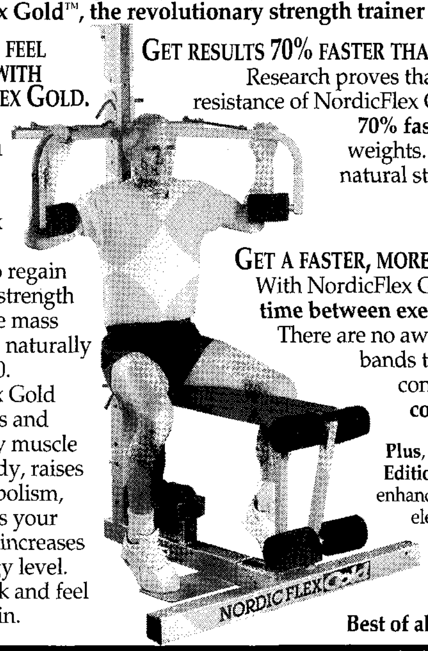
On September 22nd, John MacGregor, the British Secretary of State for Transport, was in Washington to give a speech, entitled "Open Skies—The Shape of Things to Come?" and in the course of the speech he noted that "twenty-five percent of the shareholdings and voting rights in British Airways . . . are held by U.S. citizens." He went on to complain about the United States' restrictions on foreign ownership and about its control of its airlines. The next day, MacGregor saw Card, and Card put him on notice that approval of the deal would require concessions on the British side. MacGregor offered greater access to Britain's regional airports. That would not be enough, Card said. Expanded access to London as well would be required.

There was a lot of talk about levelling the playing field. Of the Big Three, Lord King said, with no little exaggeration, "Every city in the U.S. is a catchment for them from which to fly anywhere in the world," and added, "We are a small island on the northern rim of Europe." He and others on the British side liked comparing America's near half share of the world market with Britain's three-per-cent share.

Yes, B.A. does have thirty-five per cent of the traffic out of Heathrow, a British diplomat conceded. "But this is mostly international, and B.A. must fight other carriers that have the home-field advantage. Delta can sit on its eighty-four per cent and fight nobody." He was referring to the Big Three's dominance of various hub airports in the United States—specifically, Delta's at Atlanta.

MacGregor noted in his speech that "U.S. airlines carried seventy-eight per cent of the three million passengers in 1991 who started or ended transatlantic journeys at points other than gateways."

All that would change radically, the Big Three argued, citing B.A.'s heavy advantage in beyond rights: the putative seventy-five hundred markets that a B.A.–USAir combine would have to it-



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self. Hyperbole came thick and fast from both sides. “U.S. carriers have imperialist tendencies toward Europe,” Lord King told me late last October. “They resent us being in the business at all.”

“What will happen is that the good jobs will go to London,” Crandall was quoted by Reuters as saying on September 15th. “The baggage handlers will stay here. Now if that’s a job-based policy . . . That’s why this Administration doesn’t deserve to get reëlected.”

Crandall’s people emphasized the jobs argument. If B.A.’s proposal is approved, one of them told me, “we will become a lucrative feeder system for these global airlines,” and he went on, “The good jobs—decision-making, scheduling, operations, and marketing—will be done elsewhere. We will be the gate agents, mechanics, and baggage handlers.”

A D.O.T. official who stressed the “unserious” aspects of both sides’ positions told me that a team from American Airlines had presented its case to the department. “We gave it a C-plus,” he said. “American can already fly directly or with one stop to a lot of those places.” He was referring to the mass of international city-to-city markets from which American would presumably be excluded once B.A. and USAir got together. “American could also reach a lot of them with just one stop instead of the two stops that a seamless B.A. service would entail. American confessed that it did not do the one-stop, two-stop analysis.” If it had done so, this official added, American would have found itself better off than a blended B.A.–USAir carrier on many international routes and at a disadvantage on many others.

The negotiation, if it could be called that, continued amid a babble of bluff and deception. The parties—especially the carriers—swore allegiance to open skies by asking for the moon, aware that it was out of reach. The United States negotiators were seeking, not unreasonably, immediate liberalization of access to Heathrow and other British airports and the removal of all restrictions on air service between the two countries by April of 1995. All right, the British replied, open skies are fine, provided they include more liberal rules about ownership of airlines in the United States, plus cabotage. “The American negotiators were taken aback,” a member of the British team said. “They hadn’t expected us to go beyond talking about liberalization. They thought we were being cynical. They figured we knew that their Congress would not possibly go along with any of that.”

The British position—tying liberalization of their singularly restrictive market to unattainable changes in United States law—was indeed disingenuous. It was laid down not by the government but by B.A.—a highly unusual arrangement, and one that attested to the carrier’s expanding political reach. “It is B.A.’s shout, their call,” one British diplomat said. “B.A. is telling us the American price is too high. We cannot say to them, ‘You are wrong.’ We say only, ‘We cannot buy your deal for more than you can pay.’ But B.A. hasn’t told us what the real price is. The gap is unbridgeable by negotiation. I am very pessimistic.”

Whatever B.A. might have been willing to pay did not include expanded access to Heathrow. Its senior executives said so, and their American counterparts understood. “B.A. is taking home a ton of money on its transatlantic routes,” a Delta official said. “The last thing it wants is more competition there.”

At this point, one wondered about what, if anything, American and United wanted to see happen. Having paid close to half a billion dollars apiece for the right to fly into and out of Heathrow, would either of these two airlines favor a deal that gave Delta and other United States carriers similar access? On December 2nd, the Big Three ran a full-page ad in the *Times*, responding to one that B.A. had run a week earlier. B.A.’s ad was a letter from Colin Marshall emphasizing the legality of its proposed deal and how it would strengthen domestic competition. The Big Three said in their ad that they would withdraw all objections to the deal when “British Airways and the U.K. Government are ready to give U.S. carriers the same rights in British Airways markets that British Airways seeks in U.S. markets.”

I asked Crandall how, after spending so much for T.W.A.’s Heathrow routes, he would feel about defending before his board his acquiescence in an agreement that gave his competitors the same access.

“My four-hundred-and-forty-five-million-dollar investment is O.K. provided I don’t give away my share of the Heathrow market to B.A.–USAir, or assuming I can compete with it beyond Heathrow,” he said. He then returned to the famous seventy-five hundred markets that would be available to B.A.–USAir but not to him.

Crandall, too, was asking for the moon, for Britain couldn’t confer these beyond rights on another airline, even if it wanted to. They are sheltered within bilateral agreements between Britain and dozens of other countries. Typically, agreements restrict the routes being flown to just two carriers—B.A. and the other country’s national carrier. The market is split two ways. These agreements were part of the British government’s dowry when it privatized B.A.; writing off B.A.’s debt was another part of the dowry. Crandall is quite aware, of course, that he is insisting on the unattainable; he also sees his position as fully logical. Crandall is fun because in defending his corner he may sound outrageous, but he actually says what he thinks.

In this affair, United and Delta have hidden behind Crandall, letting him play the heavy while making it known privately that their positions are less extreme than his. “We fall out of bed with Bob Crandall on this,” a senior official at United says. “We think the British should open up their market and work in good faith to open up the European Community market and beyond. But we shouldn’t hold up the deal so as to be able to go to Bangladesh.”

“We are with him rhetorically but don’t go as far,” a Delta official says. Delta would like to enlarge its presence in the British market and acquire access to Heathrow. Like United’s people, Delta’s are saying that they aren’t demanding open skies on Crandall’s terms, and will settle instead for immediate and unconditional liberalization of the British market.

I asked Crandall whether he, too, saw daylight between his position and the positions of United and Delta.

“I don’t know,” he said. “The two of them seem willing to settle for something less.”

“Crandall wants a global conference leading to completely open skies,” a closely involved figure at the State Department told me. “But he doesn’t explain how we get from here to there.”

Wasn’t the logic of the situation driving in that direction? I asked.

“Yes, and that’s what we want, too,” the official said. “Crandall is right.”

In an interview with a trade journalist, Crandall was asked what his first move would be if the B.A.–USAir deal went through. “Try to find somebody to buy us,” he replied.

“THE Administration would like to get this done before the election,” Colin Marshall told me on October 29th. Lord King, whom I’d seen two days earlier, was, for whatever reason, taking a highly optimistic line: he saw a pretty good chance that the deal would be approved before the election; if not, he reckoned, it would happen not long afterward. King hinted at the possibility of Card’s having political ambitions in Massachusetts—a strong USAir precinct. Officials in Britain’s Department of Transport took a much darker view of B.A.’s chances.

On October 19th, Ross Perot had brought the affair to the front and center of the campaign, during the third, and last, of the Presidential debates. If the deal were to be approved, he said, it would be “terribly destructive to the U.S. airline industry.”

On October 28th, Governor Bill Clinton was asked during an interview on CNN’s “Larry King Live!” where he stood on the issue. After noting that he had “real problems” with the deal, Clinton said, “We get no access to the British market if we do it. It’s just an admission that we’ve allowed the American companies to get in terrible financial trouble.”

An official at American Airlines says, “We all put enormous pressure on the three campaigns.” Crandall dealt with Perot, his fellow-Texan. “It was a great favor that Ross did for us—to raise the issue,” Crandall said when I asked him about Perot’s move. Lloyd Bentsen, the senior senator from Texas—who is the outgoing chairman of the Finance Committee and is about to become the Secretary of the Treasury—was lobbied hard by American. Ron Allen, of Delta, met with Bush in Atlanta. United’s Steve Wolf saw Clinton in Chicago the day after the third Presidential debate. In Washington, Wolf met with Acting Secretary of State Lawrence Eagleburger; with Brent Scowcroft, the national-security adviser; with Treasury Secretary Nicholas Brady; and with Samuel Skinner—on Skinner’s last day as Bush’s chief of staff. Wolf was in London in late September and twice in late October, seeing MacGregor, various other members of the House of Commons, and the British press. Crandall, too, worked the London scene. He and Wolf were thought of in London as having panicked when they discovered that Card was going there in late October to meet with MacGregor and others. (I was unable to see MacGregor—largely, it seemed, because so much of his time was being taken up by a procession of exigent visitors from America.) They apparently feared that Card and MacGregor were on the verge of clinching the deal. Why were Wolf and Crandall spending so

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much time in London, I asked King. He shrugged. "They are wasting their time," he replied, exuding optimism. He may not have known that Card had hardened the United States line in his second meeting with MacGregor by citing the need to liberalize matters, some of them immediately. It is an easy agreement to write, Card had said. All airlines of the two countries will be allowed to fly to the cities of their choice in the other country.

Buying time was part of the Big Three's strategy: they wanted to delay matters until after the election. Given what struck them as a more sympathetic view of their case from Clinton and his people, the Big Three saw their chances as improving if it became Clinton's call. But there remained a strong possibility that the decision would not be deferred beyond December 24th, the date set by B.A. Some people suggested that Bush, as a lame duck, would have had nothing to lose by following his free-trade instincts and approving the deal. Others, doubtless including the Big Three, felt that the outgoing Administration would not want to leave behind for the Republican Party the relentless hostility of three large organizations with political clout in Texas, Illinois, and Georgia. Actually, the Administration had for a time behaved as if it wanted to see the affair settled—agreement reached, if possible—before the election.

SPICED PEARS
SOUR CHERRIES
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With the momentum appearing to shift in the other direction—toward the Big Three—B.A. began to fault its partner, USAir, for having lobbied just the Administration, and for not getting to Clinton until the final days. Some of USAir's lobbyists—notably Howard Baker—did nothing for the cause, according to a British source. Actually, the positions of the Administration and Clinton had converged before the election. Only a fully balanced agreement would be acceptable to either.

Airlines talk a litigious game. B.A., I was told, had threatened to sue the D.O.T. if its deal with USAir was rejected. The Big Three had talked about suing the D.O.T. if the deal was approved. I asked Marshall what B.A. would do if Card said no. He told me that it would depend on the circumstances and on what the lawyers advised. I then asked whether B.A. would look elsewhere for a major acquisition. Might B.A. try, for example, to rekindle a proposed merger with the Dutch carrier K.L.M. that had gone quite far (until it was abandoned, in February of 1992), and would have involved Northwest Airlines? "If this deal falls through, we won't lie down," Marshall said.

"Probably, B.A. will reopen negotiations with K.L.M. if this fails," a senior British diplomat said.

Lord King, perhaps because he wasn't admitting that there was a serious possibility of defeat on the USAir deal, said, "We cannot revive the K.L.M. deal." Since others disagreed, I asked King why he felt that way. The B.A.–K.L.M. negotiation, he said, had collapsed over the issue of spoils. B.A. and the British government, he explained, "wanted a seventy-three/twenty-seven-per-cent split of the cake, but the Dutch could not swallow that, and we couldn't swallow less."

The blended airline would have owned a large slice of Northwest Airlines. Northwest is bigger than USAir and has very good beyond rights out of Tokyo. B.A. is not a strong presence in East Asia. I asked King if a deal with K.L.M. and Northwest would have been better for B.A. than the one with USAir. "Northwest in some ways would be better," he said. "It is a major carrier out of Tokyo and a big operator on the Pacific Coast."

"It was a marriage made in Heaven for B.A.," I was told by a closely involved British diplomat, who thinks that K.L.M. will try to reopen negotiations with B.A. In November, Washington decided in favor of allowing K.L.M. and Northwest to integrate their services and operate as one carrier. K.L.M. has invested four hundred million dollars in Northwest—or, more exactly, in its parent company, Wings Holdings. The investment gives K.L.M. forty-nine and a half per cent of the company's equity but only ten and a half per cent of the voting shares.

"Operationally, K.L.M. and Northwest can become one airline," an official at the D.O.T. says. "But K.L.M. can exercise very little control over Northwest. It has a presence on the board but no veto power. The carrier *can* have one name and coördinated prices, and so on." Still, according to the D.O.T.'s announcement, the two airlines would create "a joint identity by operating under the same trademark and using the same branding for aircraft exteriors and interiors, uniforms, vehicles, and stationery." A K.L.M. spokesman referred to a "seamless" service that will "give the impression to the passenger that you're on one airline."

Why did the K.L.M.–Northwest deal—a B.A.–USAir look-alike—sail through the Washington shoals with little fuss? The answer is twofold: first, K.L.M. was not seeking to share outright control of Northwest; second, the Dutch government had agreed to exactly the kind of liberal air-services agreement that Washington wanted from London and that it hoped would become a model for agreements with other E.C. countries. It won't—not in the near future.

I asked a highly experienced D.O.T. official whether he thought B.A. might trim its sails—might bring its proposal into line with the K.L.M.–Northwest deal by giving up the right to twenty-one per cent of the voting stock and a blocking minority on the board. B.A., after all, doesn't need control in order to benefit from a code-sharing arrangement with USAir; it already has that right. The official nodded, as if he'd been waiting for the question. "Yes," he said. "If B.A. came back to us with a passive, garden-variety proposal, we'd be stuck. We'd have to approve it. That kind of deal would be entirely consistent with past practice. And it would set an important precedent. Japan Airlines could come through the door and buy Delta, which is having trouble. We'd be stuck. I can't understand why B.A. hasn't done it."

On December 3rd, Card gave MacGregor the bad news in a meeting in Washington: No deal was possible, he said, unless the British caved in altogether, by agreeing to open their skies completely and forthwith; Card was insisting on more than he had asked MacGregor for in their previous meeting in London. Moreover, he said, even in a totally open-skies environment, United States law would never be amended to permit cabotage. "We said, 'What do you mean?' " a senior British official told me. " 'What have we been talking about for the past six months?' " There was

Card, the man who had foresworn the need of a quid pro quo at the outset of this strange affair, now saying that his had been the hardest line all along. "The seven hundred and fifty million dollars was there on the table, and he was refusing it flatly," the British official added. "It was a curious thing to do."

Bush and Prime Minister John Major met in Washington and at Camp David over the weekend of December 19th and 20th. For Major, who had slipped on any number of banana peels since the early autumn, Washington's rejection of the British bid would be politically awkward. It was decided on December 3rd to schedule Card's announcement for a date that would cause Major the least amount of harm. That appeared to be December 23rd—one day before the drop-dead date, and so close to the holidays as to be, with luck, swallowed up by them.

Thinking ahead to the Major visit, some British diplomats and officials concluded that B.A. should withdraw its offer, thus avoiding Card's hammer blow. B.A. agreed, and, in the end, so did John Major. London's thinking went that B.A. could and probably should submit a "passive, garden-variety proposal," in a second effort to make the link with USAir. Major took some convincing, but when he saw Bush he noted the possibility of a B.A. withdrawal. He and Bush then agreed that Card and MacGregor would talk once more, and if there was no movement on either side B.A. would withdraw. Card and MacGregor had a pro-forma telephone conversation on December 21st. On December 22nd, B.A. announced its withdrawal from the field but noted that "despite this setback, British Airways and USAir intend to continue to discuss alternative relationships."

On the same day, Card held a news conference from which diplomatic niceties, not to mention the holiday spirit, were notably absent. The British, he said, "are relatively protectionist in how they implement their trading relationships." He also indicated, rather gratuitously, that he would probably have said no to the B.A. bid if it hadn't been withdrawn.

It would be hard to find another industry with so strongly protected a market that loses so much money. Crandall says, "The nature of the airline business is such that it is very difficult for anybody to make money in an unregulated system." Airline deregulation was supposed to help the carriers by liberating them. It was supposed to help the consumer by fostering competition. But fare wars that lowered costs for many travellers, depending on where they were going, created an environment in which only the richest and best-established carriers could survive. Now the Big Three complain about being unable to compete against Chapter 11 carriers, which pay only a portion of their costs.

A less restrictive global environment is said to be essential to the future well-being of air transport. But the prognosis isn't good. Even as people, capital, and goods are moving more freely throughout the world, air services are edging toward more restrictions; talks about liberalization may simply lead to more protectionism. The B.A.–USAir deal, if it had gone through, would surely have had a strong ripple effect; at a minimum, it would have promoted competition on domestic and international routes. That would have created an important precedent—one that would have brightened prospects for a more liberalized environment. The failure of the deal is expected to stall serious movement in that direction. And B.A., of course, has just taken seven hundred and fifty million dollars off the table.

"We are not going to pay twice for the privilege of saving this airline," B.A. people said.

"No one wants to say no to the Brits—but they didn't give enough," a State Department official says.

B.A.'s seven hundred and fifty million dollars will be spent elsewhere. After learning that its deal with USAir was dead, B.A. acquired a twenty-five-percent share of Qantas, the Australian airline.

In talking with Crandall about the B.A.–USAir deal, I asked where he thought the interests of the average consumer lay. "Consumers and workers are the same people in different suits," he shot back. "Jobs are going, and that's bad."

Isolating the consumer's interest ought to be easy, but it isn't. The airline business is deceptive, even perverse, and is quite beyond the comprehension of the average frequent flyer who wants to understand why airlines say what they say and behave as they do. ♦

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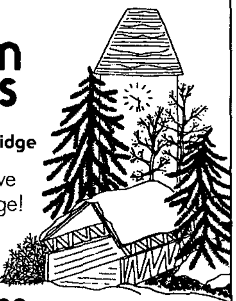

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In the conclusion of a two-part report, a mother confronts the damage inflicted on her by a terrifying legacy of abuse and neglect—and by her own drug addiction—as she struggles to win her troubled children back from the foster-care system.

BY SUSAN SHEEHAN

WHEN Florence Drummond gave birth to her first child, a daughter she named Crystal, on January 11, 1970, one month before her nineteenth birthday, she was living in an elegant gray stone mansion in Manhattan's East Seventies that had been converted into a home for unwed mothers. Crystal was born in New York Hospital. "It was lovely," Florence says. "And the next day you couldn't tell I just had a baby. I walked around that hospital hallway like someone who had never been pregnant. I was ready to go home." A few days later, Florence returned (with Crystal) to what had been her home until the sixth month of her pregnancy—the apartment of a friend in a housing project in Harlem.

Florence had met Crystal's father, Wesley Taylor, in the summer of 1968. She was walking from her friend's building to a store to buy cigarettes. When she passed him on the street, he said hello, "nicely." She ignored him. When she passed him on the return walk, he asked her name and whether she lived in the project. She answered. He kept coming around—he lived nearby, with his mother, Felicia Taylor; his father, Roderick Jenkins; and his younger brothers—and eventually they started dating. "Crystal's father was a real charmer," Florence says. "He swept you off your feet." She had been brought up in a strict manner, and Wesley was her first man. Wesley had spent most of his childhood in his mother's home town, Birmingham, Alabama; had come North for his last year of high school; and had graduated in 1968—an A student, a part-time messenger, and a fairly heavy drinker. He worked as a full-time messenger until early 1969, when he enlisted in the Air Force to avoid being drafted into the Army during the Vietnam War. While he was still in basic training, Florence realized she was pregnant. She wrote to him about her pregnancy and hoped that he would marry her in August, when he was due home on leave before going to Korea, but he told her then that he didn't have enough money and that the Air Force might not approve of such a marriage. Florence knew that Wesley already had a daughter, Melanie, born in September, 1968, who lived with her mother in Delaware. What she didn't know was that Wesley was hoping to eventually marry Melanie's mother. Melanie's mother married someone else. "After that, his philosophy became to do unto others as they do unto him but let him do it first," his brother Nelson Taylor says. Wesley got another woman, Carol, pregnant while he was on a subsequent home leave; his son by her, Howard Taylor, was born in the fall of 1972. Florence claims she was "mad at first" about Howard's birth but got over it.

After Crystal's birth, Florence applied for welfare. Before her application was granted, she obtained the first of a series of jobs as a clerk-typist for lawyers and insurance agencies; she paid a Hispanic babysitter to care for Crystal during the week. She cashed the welfare checks she was sent without notifying the Department of Welfare that she was gainfully employed. When Staff Sergeant Wesley Taylor was discharged from the Air Force, in 1973, after a second tour in Korea and a few months in Vietnam, he and Florence and Crystal stayed at Felicia's for a while, then moved to a one-bedroom walkup on West 128th Street. There was a church nearby, where Crystal attended a Head Start program. There was also a small restaurant nearby, where Wesley took up with a woman named Barbara while continuing to see Carol—and others. Florence's next apartment with Wesley was on West 100th Street. Supposedly renovated, it was filled with rats "the size of cats," she says.

Wesley had become seriously addicted to drugs while he was serving overseas; his drug habit became even worse once he was back in New York City, and he never kicked it. He received unemployment insurance, and when that ran out he went on welfare. "Wesley led me into drugs," Florence says. "Heroin and cocaine." In January, 1976, she was laid off from her job; she supplemented her welfare checks by shoplifting. In August, 1976, Wesley and Florence's second child, a son they named Carlos, was born—gravely addicted to drugs. He developed pneumonia, spent a few months in the hospital, and went directly into foster care in the Bronx. Crystal remembers accompanying Florence to visit him. Carlos appeared frightened of Florence, whose skin is dark. He was less frightened of Crystal, who describes her complexion as "high yellow," perhaps (Crystal speculates) because the daughter of Carlos's foster mother had light skin. After Carlos's birth, Wesley, Florence, and Crystal moved to a two-bedroom sixth-floor walkup on Sheridan Avenue in the Bronx.

Florence was pregnant again a month after Carlos was born. In the spring of 1977, she was arrested for shoplifting, and it was discovered that there was a warrant out for her arrest on charges of welfare fraud in excess of five thousand dollars. In early June, she was sentenced to serve seven days on Riker's Island. As a pregnant woman, she probably wouldn't have had to do jail time for a first shoplifting arrest, but the welfare fraud was grand larceny. The week in jail covered both offenses. She returned to her apartment from Riker's Island, found women's underwear in her bed, tracked Wesley to a bar on 126th Street, and caught him kissing Barbara at the bar door. On June 30, 1977, Florence and Wesley's second son, Matthew, was born. "Call it a guardian angel, but Matthew was born free of drugs," Florence says. (All the names in this account have been changed, and identifying details have been altered.)

As a veteran, Wesley Taylor was entitled to education benefits. While Florence was in jail, he enrolled in a community college, and spent some tuition and book money getting high with Barbara. After Matthew's birth, Florence stopped using drugs briefly and went to a business school, studying to become an executive secretary. She dropped out of school, because in order to get Carlos out of foster care she had to be home full time. Wesley's contribution to Carlos's release was to hold a job. He worked at a parking lot until Carlos came home, in 1978, and for a while afterward; it was the only job he ever had after leaving the service. Wesley had a second son with Carol as well—Roy, born in 1978.

SUE COE

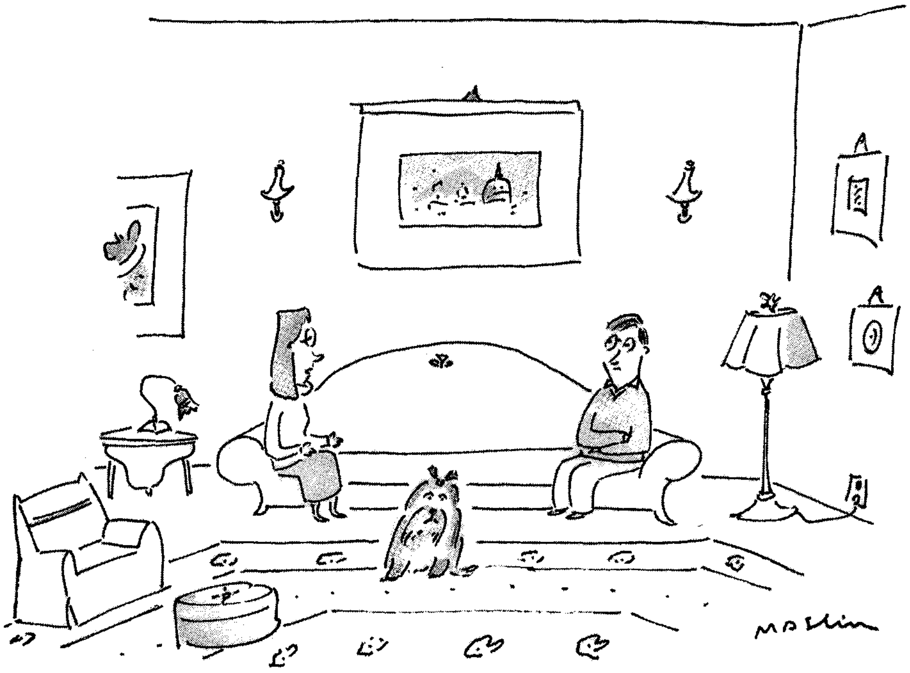
DRUG users and drug dealers frequented the apartments on West 128th Street and West 100th Street, but life took a turn for the worse at Sheridan Avenue. Of Florence's children, only Crystal can remember her as a sober working woman "before my father hooked her on drugs," and only Crystal has a few happy memories of Wesley. His terms of endearment for her were "baby girl" and "bugaloo." If her room was messy, he would say, "Damn, you is a dirty little heifer," but not without affection. When she was about five, he took her to her first circus, with Melanie—that was the only time she ever met her half-sister. He hit her just once, because she ran into the street and narrowly missed being struck by a car. Crystal also remembers that she had "all types of toys, dolls, and, after Mommy swindled a man she met in a bar out of some money he had stashed in his apartment, a new pink bicycle."

Crystal's childhood ended on Sheridan Avenue in 1977, after Matthew's birth. By then, Wesley was here today and gone tomorrow; he spent two or three nights out at a time, either at Felicia's apartment or at Barbara's, on West 129th Street. Florence resented Barbara for buying him away from her. Whereas Florence received only a welfare check for herself and the children, Barbara also received a salary for working in a restaurant her family owned.

Florence often kept Crystal out of school to babysit—first for Matthew and then, after Carlos's release from foster care, for both boys. Crystal resented her mother's 9 A.M. to 11 P.M. absences. When Florence was home, Crystal was sometimes terrified that she might overdose. At the same time, she recalls, "I was usually glad she was high, because she enjoyed the high and left me alone. When she got her fix, she was the beautifullest mother in the world. We could do things that we couldn't do two hours ago. There was no doubt when she was high. She'd get into the middle of the street and start wiggling her butt and embarrass me. I'd rather see her like that than in the other mood. If she needed a fix, she'd get edgy and agitated, and when I said 'Mommy' she'd go *pow*, and hit me on the side of the head." Crystal eventually began drinking and using drugs—cocaine, PCP, mescaline—herself.

One evening when Crystal was about ten, Wesley and Florence had what Florence calls "a stupid argument that grew." Wesley started hitting Florence. He hit her until her eyes were swollen and her body was black and blue from head to toe. Florence remembers that he stopped hitting her only when Crystal jumped on his back and hollered his name. When she woke up, he was gone. He came back a few weeks later and apologized. "He said he didn't mean to do it and was sorry for how bad he had hurted me," Florence says. "I told him it was over." For the next ten years, Wesley lived with Barbara. Carlos and Matthew scarcely saw their father after that; when they did, they called him Wesley, not Daddy.

Florence had other men coming and going even while she was still taking Wesley Taylor's clothes out of or putting them into plastic bags on his comings and goings. In 1980, before Wesley left for the last time, Florence, approaching thirty, was seeing Clarence, a man in his late fifties. She had also taken up with a twenty-one-year-old named Leonard and, although she was using an intrauterine device, soon became pregnant with Leonard's child. She broke up with him, because she had good reason to believe he was sexually involved with Crystal. In the summer of 1982, Florence and her children were evicted from Sheridan Avenue for nonpayment of rent. Her furniture was taken by marshals. Florence promised Crystal she would get it back, but she was unable to make good on the promise. For a month, she and the children lived in a nearby basement



"All right, I was wrong. A Shih-Tzu was not all that was missing from our marriage."

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apartment without electricity. From there Florence moved the children to Findlay Avenue to live with Hazel, a cousin of Florence's. Clarence had a room and a shared bathroom on nearby Grant Avenue. Florence moved in with him, returning most mornings to check on the children and most evenings to make sure they ate before they went to bed. Natasha, Leonard's daughter, was born in October, 1982. Florence's next child, James, whose father was Clarence, was born in February, 1984.

Clarence worked as a janitor in a nursing home on the East Side. He was the best of the fathers of Florence's children: he drove them in an aged Cadillac to a bakery in Queens for day-old cake, treated them to fast food, and took them to the zoo. He bought Pampers for Natasha and, later, for James. He also bought drugs for Florence, although he used no drugs himself.

Life took another downhill turn for Florence's children on Findlay Avenue. In 1983, at the age of thirteen, Crystal had moved to the apartment of her boyfriend Daquan Jefferson. After she gave birth to a son, little Daquan, in October, 1984, she came to the attention of the Office of Special Services for Children, a section of New York City's Human Resources Administration. In December, 1984, little Daquan was placed in foster care with a family on Long Island, and in January, 1985, Crystal was placed in a group home in Queens run by St. Christopher-Ottilie, the largest nonprofit foster-care agency in the city. Crystal's S.S.C. worker had judged Daquan's parents' apartment and Hazel's apartment unsuitable places for either Crystal or her baby to live.

In the spring of 1985, Florence checked herself into a hospital detoxification program. She told Clarence where she was—he promised her he would check on Carlos, Matthew, Natasha, and James every day after work—but she didn't tell Hazel. When Florence hadn't turned up for several days, Hazel called the police: she didn't want to be bothered looking after the children. The police came and took the Drummond children to the precinct and then to a hospital, where they were examined for signs of physical abuse. There were none, so the children were returned to Hazel's apartment. A couple of days later, Crystal's S.S.C. worker showed up there. He proposed giving Hazel temporary custody of Florence's children. Hazel's own daughter, who was twelve, had recently gone to school with bruises and had told her teacher that Hazel had beaten her up. When Crystal's S.S.C. worker returned to his office, he learned about the pending charges against Hazel. Until the child-abuse charges were disposed of, Hazel could not be given custody of anyone else's children.

Clarence let Florence know what had happened. She had been planning to have a hernia operation after completing the detoxification program, but the excitement caused her hernia to flare up. She was taken from the detox floor to the surgical floor to be operated on the following day. After a couple of shots of Demerol the pain subsided. The hernia was no longer a medical emergency, so Florence agreed to postpone the operation for two weeks. She telephoned the S.S.C. worker. He told her to come to his office. She showed him that she was still wearing a hospital band around her wrist, and explained what had happened. He said that because of Florence's situation—including her prospective return to the hospital—he would have to put her children into foster care. She signed them into placement voluntarily and asked the worker to keep the four children together.

In April, 1985, Carlos, eight, Matthew, seven, Natasha, two, and James, one, went to live with Mrs. Evelyn Peoples, in the Crown Heights section of Brooklyn. Mrs. Peoples, who was fifty, was separated from her husband. She was licensed for foster care directly by S.S.C. Mrs. Peoples had three children of her own—two daughters, who were in their twenties, and a fifteen-year-old son—living at home. When the four Drummond children arrived, she found them extremely undersocialized, lacking in self-control and manners, destructive with toys and her household belongings, and competitive with each other. In March, 1986, a month when her S.S.C. worker wrote that "all children have made an excellent adjustment to their foster care placement," Mrs. Peoples concluded that she could no longer keep Carlos; she wanted him removed from her home. For a year, he had been stealing money, comic books, and toys from the Peoples family, and had been disobedient at home and in school. There were two final straws for Mrs.

Peoples: he had stolen two hundred dollars—the savings of one of her daughters—and Mrs. Peoples had learned from Matthew that Carlos had gone off at least twice with older men and received money in return for sexual favors. Carlos admitted that this was true.

Carlos was evaluated by a caseworker, a psychologist, and a psychiatrist. He was described in the evaluation reports as a tiny, bright-eyed, cute nine-year-old, who looked no more than seven. Carlos said that his mother had often taken him along when she bought and sold drugs and had had him perform sexual acts with her junkie friends in return for money or drugs. He foresaw an early death for himself from drugs from a needle. He thought his siblings might fare better, because they had not been with Florence so much. He had been beaten from an early age—with sticks and extension cords—and when Florence started to beat him she couldn't stop; Matthew had been beaten less. Carlos said that he had been left back in the second grade, and that neither he nor his mother had cared.

The psychiatrist thought that Carlos's basic average intelligence and his ability to talk about his life experiences were promising signs and made him an excellent candidate for therapy, but he didn't think Carlos could adjust acceptably to a normal foster-boarding home, and recommended placement in a residential treatment center.

In May, after Carlos was sent to a diagnostic center while awaiting placement in a residential treatment center, Matthew began stealing money from the Peoples family and destroying property. After testing, it was concluded that he, too, belonged in a residential treatment center. On July 1, 1986, both boys were admitted to Children's Village, in Dobbs Ferry, New York. Mrs. Peoples suddenly became ill, after the departure of Carlos and Matthew, and required hospitalization. S.S.C. was unable to find a foster home for two children on short notice, so Natasha was placed with a family in Queens and James with a family in the Bronx.

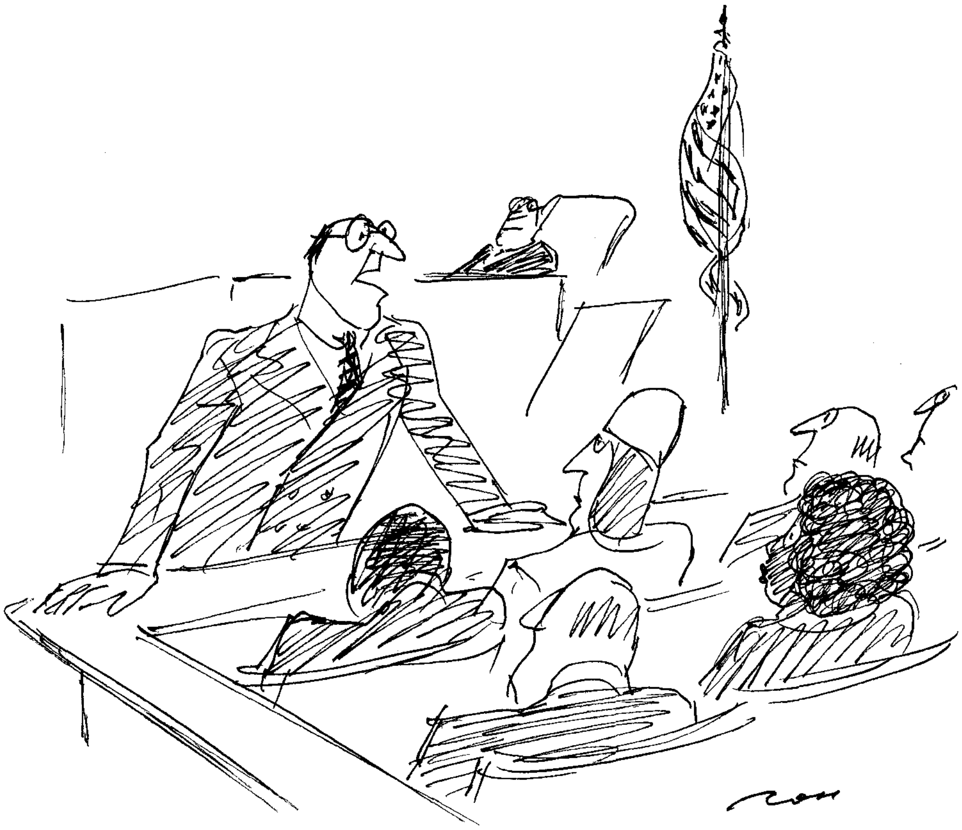
The detoxification attempt had failed, and Florence was too deeply involved with drugs—using them and selling them—to pay attention to her children in 1985 once they were in foster care. Not long after the children went into foster care, she moved her personal possessions from Hazel's apartment to Clarence's room. Crystal saw Florence regularly—she could travel alone to theold neighborhood and find her somewhere—but Florence did not show up for for important events in Crystal's life, like her graduation from junior high school. Florence visited the four younger children, at the Brooklyn S.S.C. office, only twice in 1985. In December of 1985, Carlos, Matthew, Natasha, and James were adjudicated to be neglected; the neglect petition was for eighteen months. Florence scarcely visited her children during the first half of 1986, either. Crystal confided to her social worker at the group home that she was afraid her mother would lose her parental rights and that she was angered by her lack of interest in her children.

In July, Florence was informed that Carlos and Matthew were at Children's Village, and in August she went to see them. That summer, Crystal observed that Florence's stomach was growing. She asked her mother if she was pregnant. Florence, who was thirty-five, answered, "No, I ain't pregnant, I got a fucking tumor."

The phone rang at Crystal's group home on October 27, 1986. It was Florence. "You got a new brother," Florence said.

"You lying, you lying," Crystal said. "What happened to the tumor?" She later told a friend, "I was angry. It wasn't only that this lady told me a dumb lie but she already had five kids and a grandchild in foster care and for what she be needing a sixth child?"

To this day, Florence maintains that she had no idea she was pregnant. "I was so high and the baby was so drugged that he never stirred," she explains. Two weeks before he was born, she had pains, but she was too strung out to think about them. On the morning of October 27th, Florence felt bad pains. She had an acquaintance call an ambulance. When it arrived, she got in and gave the attendant in the back her name. "Before he could ask me any more questions or take my blood pressure, I gave birth," Florence says. "I told the attendant 'Go get the baby.' When he asked me 'What baby?' I told him 'The baby between my legs.' He cut the umbilical cord, wrapped the baby in a white sheet, put him on my stomach, and wrapped another sheet around me and him. The attendant asked me did I have a name for him. I said



"Let the record show, ladies and gentlemen of the jury, that I am a very successful attorney."

'No. What is your name?' 'Michael,' he said. 'O.K., that's his name—Michael.' Later, Clarence came to visit me in the hospital. He didn't ask me what I was going to do with Michael, because he had already asked me what I was going to do with James."

Michael was born with positive toxicity toward cocaine and spent six months in the hospital. He was then put directly into foster care with a fifty-eight-year-old woman in Brooklyn. While Michael was still in the hospital, Crystal often went there to feed him. The nurses assumed she was his mother, which led Crystal to believe that Florence didn't spend much time there. Florence didn't tell Carlos and Matthew about Michael's birth until February, 1987. She didn't know how they would react to the news.

SEVENTEEN years earlier, in November, 1969, Florence learned that her mother, Lavinia Wilson, had just given birth to a daughter. She was even angrier than Crystal was in 1986. Florence found out about her sister Cynthia's birth at a baby shower being given for Florence when she was seven months pregnant with Crystal. Florence's mother and her two brothers had been invited. Her brothers came. She asked one of them where their mother was, and when he answered "Home with the baby" she asked, "What baby?" He said that their mother was delighted to have a daughter and was enjoying staying home with her, and he told her that Cynthia had arrived, at the beginning of the month, as a complete surprise. Lavinia had given birth abruptly, in her living room. At that time, Florence was eighteen. She had been in foster care since she was six years old.

Florence Drummond was born to Lavinia Wilson and Sylvester Drummond in New York City on February 12, 1951. Lavinia had had a son, whom she named Clifford, a year earlier, when she was nineteen. Lavinia, one of eight children born to Freeman Wilson and his wife, Rebecca, had grown up on a farm outside Memphis, Tennessee. She was raised poor. Her father was a farmer with a third-grade education; her mother worked in a laundry. Rebecca died when Lavinia was ten, and Freeman married a widow named Mabel. There were numerous step-relatives—children Rebecca had had before she married, children Mabel had had with her first husband. Lavinia attended segregated country schools through the ninth grade.

When Lavinia was about fourteen, the principal of her school arranged for her to go to Baltimore to "help a colored doctor and his wife" with their two small children and to attend school there. She was put back three grades. "They did that in the North to anyone coming from the South," she says. Lavinia considered the doctor's wife too strict and the schoolwork a waste of time, and returned home about a year later. In the summer of 1947, at the age of sixteen, Lavinia went to New York and stayed with step-relatives. "I got a house job taking care of a four-year-old boy," she says. "That lasted a number of years, until I got pregnant with Clifford."

Lavinia moved to a rooming house and went on welfare after Clifford's birth. She says that Sylvester Drummond "had a job as a housepainter when I first met him, but later decided he was too good to work." He abandoned her when she was pregnant with Clifford. He soon reappeared, she took him back, she got pregnant with Florence. They parted for good after Florence's birth, when she caught him cheating on her with "other womens," one of whom he later married. She believed that her life was deteriorating and sent the children to Memphis to live with Mabel, by then a widow. In 1953, Lavinia, still in New York, had another son, Samuel Wilson, by a man she had known in passing. No one in the family had been religious, but after Samuel's birth Lavinia came under the influence of a missionary, Winona Snowden, from a fundamentalist church in Harlem, whom she refers to as her "spiritual mother." She felt guilty about having had three children out of wedlock, started going to church most weekdays, several evenings, and for hours on Sunday, and describes the life she has led since as "a saved life."

Clifford and Florence returned to New York from Memphis in 1955; they went back there as children only once, for Mabel's funeral, in 1956. In the mid-fifties, Lavinia and her three children lived in a walkup on West 130th Street. They had a sparsely furnished bedroom and living room, and shared a bathroom and a small kitchen with the other family on the floor. There was a communal hot plate, but they had their own icebox—an old-fashioned one, which cooled food with a block of ice. The

"They rule a tiny municipality on the top three floors."

welfare check on which Lavinia and her children subsisted didn't go far. As Clifford remembers his youth, "Mom scraped pennies. There was no money for enjoyment, except a small black-and-white TV. No Christmas presents, no birthday presents, not enough clothes, and not too much to eat—sometimes just a can of spaghetti for dinner. Mom ate what we did." What Lavinia's children remember most about their early years is the churchgoing and the beatings. Lavinia often lost control and hit Florence and the boys with whatever implement was handy—an ironing cord, an extension cord, a doubled-up brown belt.

When the children played with the pan under the antique icebox into which the melting block of ice dripped, and spilled the water, Florence says she alone was whipped for the misdeed. Sometimes when just the three children were home, Florence ran away before her mother's return, to avoid an anticipated beating. She would either come home by herself or be brought back by the police. She appeared to be the target of her mother's guilt; Lavinia later told a caseworker that she felt compelled to punish her, according to "the Lord's direction." Lavinia also often forced Clifford to beat Florence.

A neighbor of Lavinia's had been threatening to telephone the New York Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children. Lavinia dismissed the threat, but it was carried out one day in late 1957, when the neighbor heard Florence wailing even louder than usual. Florence was removed from the apartment and taken to Manhattan's Children's Court, on East Twenty-second Street. Her body was a mass of bruises, welts, and cuts; one side of her face and one eye were badly swollen. Lavinia was ordered to appear in the court. Clifford and Samuel accompanied her. Two neighbors testified against Lavinia. She was found guilty of inflicting frequent and severe beatings on Florence, was placed on probation, and was referred to Bellevue Hospital for psychiatric evaluation and to the Harlem Hospital Mental Hygiene Clinic for guidance. She and the boys went home; Florence did not. Florence was committed as a neglected child to the Bureau of Child Welfare. (By the time Florence's children went into foster care, B.C.W. had been renamed Special Services for Children.)

In December, 1957, Florence was placed by Windham Children's Services, which specialized in temporary foster-home placements, with a young family in Brooklyn; she completed first grade while she was staying with them. Florence spoke to the caseworker about her dislike of the beatings she had received from her mother and about the lengthy church sessions she had had to attend with her; she said the emotional, frenzied worship frightened her. She also talked about the time away from her mother in the South. The caseworker believed that she was as healthy as she was because of the years she had spent with her grandmother.

In 1958, Florence's foster family went out of the state for a summer vacation, and Florence had to be moved. Windham chose another temporary foster-care family, who lived around the corner, so that Florence's life would have some continuity. She expressed pleasure in accompanying the foster family on excursions to parks and museums and in leading a fuller life with the new family than she ever had with her mother. During Florence's first year in foster care, Lavinia, Clifford, and Samuel periodically visited her in Brooklyn; the caseworker noted that Florence appeared happier to see her brothers than her mother.

Florence's court-ordered indefinite stay in foster care was contingent upon Lavinia's psychiatric diagnosis and treatment. In March, 1958, the Bellevue psychiatrist who examined Lavinia had determined that she "could not be counted on to control her impulses" and that "the child, therefore, should not be with her." That year, Lavinia was also described by a caseworker as an "emotionally disturbed, immature person." When Lavinia was subsequently interviewed by caseworkers, she said "she felt that she was justified in whipping Florence and that she perhaps did not whip her with the right kind of article because the Judge had said that she should not have been thrashed with a strap." On another occasion, a caseworker reported, Lavinia said that a "neighbor complained that she heard only Florence being whipped, that wasn't true. She beat them all. So did the neighbor beat her own children. How else does one teach them right from wrong? The trouble was they had the strap in court. If they don't want her to use a strap, let them just tell her what to use." When Lavinia was asked what Florence did that provoked the beating, "she could not recall anything," the worker noted.

Lavinia Wilson kept some appointments at the Mental Hygiene Clinic, but when Florence was not returned to her she stopped attending the clinic. Because she showed no insight into her behavior, did not realize she had any emotional problems, and stated that she had no need for any type of casework or guidance, long-term foster care was recommended for Florence. In the second half of 1958, the Bureau of Child Welfare started looking for a permanent home for her. Despite Florence's "unusually good adjustment to foster care," it took the Department of Welfare's Allocations Unit a few months to place her, because there was "a lack of homes." In early December, Sheltering Arms Children's Service, a Manhattan voluntary agency on East Twenty-ninth Street, placed Florence with Earlene and Benjamin Gardner.

On December 5, 1958, Florence went to live with the Gardners, in an airy, spacious apartment in a building with an elevator, off Convent Avenue in a middle-class section of Harlem, about fifteen blocks from Lavinia Wilson's two tenement rooms. Earlene Gardner's mother had been a foster mother since 1934. As she grew old and infirm, Earlene, a voice teacher who didn't marry until 1947, when she was in her forties, took over the foster children and reared them with the same philosophy: "Books and boys don't mix." A few Kodacolor prints, stamped "February, 1959" in red on the back, show Florence, wearing a frilly party dress, blowing out the candles on her birthday cake. The photographs have faded to sepia tones after thirty years in the Sheltering Arms files.

Almost the first thing that Florence's caseworker noticed about her was that she addressed Mr. Gardner as Daddy, while Marjorie, the other foster child in the household, called him Mr. Gardner. Perhaps because Florence was outgoing and appreciative, the worker concluded, she elicited a friendlier response from him than the "aloof" and "difficult" Marjorie did. To the worker, he was a "passive" figure. To Marjorie, he was a loathsome man. He worked irregularly, contributed little financially to the household, drank to excess, held it up to his wife that he was about ten years her junior, slept in a separate bedroom, refused to have his clothes washed with the children's clothes, and wouldn't eat with the children.

Lavinia, Clifford, and Samuel visited Florence in May and September of 1959, at the agency's office. Florence's

FAREWELL

I

It is true, as someone has said, that in
A world without Heaven all is farewell.
Whether you wave your hand or not,

It is farewell, and if no tears come to your eyes
It is still farewell, and if you pretend not to notice,
Hating what passes, it is still farewell.

Farewell no matter what. And the palms as they lean
Over the green, bright lagoon, and the pelicans
Diving, and the glistening bodies of bathers resting

Are stages in an ultimate stillness, and the movement
Of sand, and of wind, and the secret moves of the body
Are part of the same, a simplicity that turns being

Into an occasion for mourning, or into an occasion
Worth celebrating, for what else does one do,
Feeling the weight of the pelicans' wings,

The density of the palms' shadows, the cells that darken
The backs of bathers? These are beyond the distortions
Of chance, beyond the evasions of music. The end

Is enacted again and again. And we feel it
In the temptations of sleep, in the moon's ripening,
In the wine as it waits in the glass.

II

The sickness of angels is nothing new.
We have seen them crawling like bees,
Flightless, chewing their tongues, not singing,

Down by the bus terminal, hanging out,
Showing their legs, hiding their wings,
Carrying on for their brief term on earth,

No longer smiling; asleep in the shade of each other,
They drift into the arms of strangers who step

Into their light, which is the mascara of Eden,

Offering more than invisible love,
Intangible comforts, offering the taste,
The pure erotic glory of darkness,

Of death without echoes, the feel of kisses
Blown out of Heaven, melting the moment they land.

III

Go in any direction and you will return to the main drag.
Something about the dull little shops, the useless items
That turn into necessity, a sense of direction,

Even the feel of becoming yourself on your return,
As you pass through the outskirts, the rows of houses
Aglow with an icy green from TVs, spreading

A sheen of familiarity, of deliverance, as you
Make your way back to the center, where, because of the hour,
The streets are deserted except for the slow passage of cars,

And here and there somebody standing for no reason,
Holding a letter in her hand or holding a leash
With no dog visible at the other end, casting a still shadow,

And you pass by unsure if this coming back is a failure
Or a sign of success, a sign that the time has come
To embrace your origins as you would yourself,

That staying away no longer makes sense, even if no one
Is shedding tears over the folly or wisdom of your decision.
The world has always gotten along without you,

Which is why you left home in the first place.
So what about those shops and the empty luminous cones
Of light that fall from the lamps, and the echo of your own steps?

From far away, life looked to be simpler back in the town
You started from ... Look, there in the kitchen are Mom and Dad,
He's reading the paper, she's killing a fly.

—Mark Strand

reaction to seeing her mother was casual. She enjoyed seeing her brothers. Then the visits stopped for a year, for no apparent reason. Lavinia returned to the agency in September of 1960, without Clifford or Samuel. The Sheltering Arms caseworker asked where they were. Lavinia said she had sent them South, to a boarding school run by her church, because she had to work and couldn't take care of them after school. Lavinia wanted to know when she would get Florence back. Despite the adjudication of neglect, she claimed that the judge and the probation officer had told her that Florence's removal was only temporary. The caseworker asked her if it wouldn't be a better idea to have all three children with her in New York, rather than just Florence. Lavinia said no. Lavinia, then thirty, struck the worker as "a woman who appears to be in her late teens," and "appears to function well with her children out of the home, but to have much guilt related to the manner in which Florence was removed and is kept from her."

On December 29, 1960, Clifford and Samuel, who were home for Christmas vacation, showed up at Sheltering Arms with Winona Snowden, the missionary who had brought Lavinia into the fundamentalist Harlem church. Mrs. Snowden spoke at length to the caseworker. She said that she devoted much of her time to the "girls" she recruited and converted. In her opinion, Lavinia was so exceptionally orderly that she couldn't tolerate anything out of place, and when Florence would play and leave a mess, as children do, Lavinia would fly into an uncontrollable rage. Lavinia had improved since the boys went South. Mrs. Snowden had got Lavinia her present job, as a domestic for a wealthy family, for which she seemed suited. (She had done factory work, but factories often went out on strike.) The boys had grown during the three months they had been in school, thanks to better, consistent care and regular food. The Bureau of Child Welfare reviewed Florence's case annually, but kept her in foster care, because Lavinia never seriously sought her return home and never changed.

Florence has happy memories of attending Camp Minisink, in upstate New York, for several weeks every summer, and of participating in year-round activities that the camp held in Harlem. She liked watching television with Mrs. Gardner, going to the zoo, to church socials, and to the movies, and shopping. Food seemed to be her primary concern. (That was evidence of her "early deprivation," in one caseworker's opinion.) Her room contained many toys related to food—a refrigerator, a stove, dishes, cooking utensils—and she ate voraciously. After three and a half years at the Gardners', she was twenty-four pounds overweight. In her teens, she was five feet tall (that was to be her adult height), weighed a hundred and forty pounds, wore a woman's size-18 dress, and was mistaken for somebody's mother by one of her former caseworkers while she was visiting the agency. Dexedrine—an amphetamine with a high potential for abuse—was briefly prescribed for weight reduction by an agency doctor, but proved ineffective. Mrs. Gardner had difficulty finding youthful clothes to fit Florence, and sometimes resorted to friends' hand-me-downs.

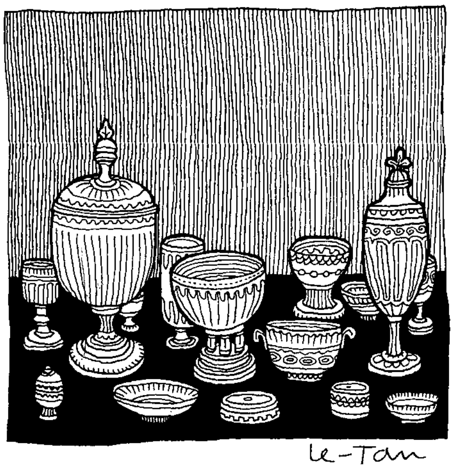
Mrs. Gardner emerges from the hundred-page narrative of Florence's years in care (the pages reek of mildew after a quarter century of storage in Sheltering Arms' basement, and those on Thermofax paper are brittle and crumble at a touch) as a rigid person with troubles of her own. One of her most obvious concerns was money. In the nineteen-sixties, foster parents received a stipend of approximately a hundred dollars a month for each child and could submit a monthly expense account. Mrs. Gardner put in for twelve dollars and fifty cents after she had to call a plumber to extricate a piece of china from the toilet: Florence had broken a good plate without telling her. When Mrs. Gardner put in a request for five dollars to send Florence's trunk to camp ahead of her, the caseworker warned her that the agency would not pay for what it deemed an unwarranted expense. Within a year of Florence's arrival, Mrs. Gardner was pleading with the caseworkers for another foster child. Her pleas increased after Marjorie's departure, which had come about when Marjorie was caught shoplifting from two department stores, was sent to Bellevue for observation, and was placed, at her request, in a group home, because she had been beaten by Mr. Gardner.

Lavinia Wilson was originally informed that Florence was living on Long Island, and for three years she visited Florence at the agency. Mrs. Gardner, who was privy to this deception, said Lavinia could always be told later that Florence had moved: Mrs. Gardner had had a bad experience with home visits by one foster daughter's alcoholic mother, and preferred agency visits. In 1962, Lavinia Wilson was told the truth and was permitted to visit Florence at the Gardners' for an hour on the third Wednesday of every month. Although the visits went smoothly, Lavinia usually visited only every second month, and once didn't show up for five months; she explained that in addition to working full time she had been attending evening courses in typing and other subjects. Mrs. Gardner took it upon herself to invite Lavinia to special occasions, such as Florence's junior-high-school graduation and a Sunday-school graduation, and let Florence accompany Lavinia to a local photographer to have her picture taken in her graduation dress (an authorized ten-dollar expenditure). Lavinia Wilson said tearfully to a caseworker that she could not have done the job with Florence that Mrs. Gardner was doing. Mrs. Gardner told the worker that Miss Wilson stayed only an hour when she visited and "does not need to be told when to go." She described her as a very coöperative, considerate mother.

Florence expressed gratitude to the Gardners, but after three years with them she told her caseworker that she was anxious to return to her mother and had made a conscious effort to be good. Her mother had said that if she was a good girl she could come home. As the years went by, Lavinia continued to express a desire to have Florence return to live with her but always found an excuse, such as inadequate housing, not to have her do so.

Mrs. Gardner derived a great deal of satisfaction from her girls' academic achievement. Florence did well in grade school. Her intelligence was tested—it was average—and when she fell behind in some subjects in junior high school Mrs. Gardner sought tutoring help for her.

FLORENCE left the Gardners' abruptly in June of 1967, at the end of tenth grade, and asked to be moved to another foster home. Up to then, her caseworkers had had only an inkling of the situation in the Gardner household. Florence is sure that they were as aware of Marjorie's beating as she was but let it go because Marjorie was perceived to be a wild child. (She later turned to drugs, and died at an early age.) Mr. Gardner had made sexual advances to Florence in a taxicab. He had wandered through her bedroom at night on several occasions. Mrs. Gardner had installed a lock on Florence's bedroom door, which she could chain from the inside. When the lock didn't prove strong enough, she advised Florence to put her dresser against the door, and, later, her trunk. In December of 1966, after Mr. Gardner started to call her at friends' houses and at Camp Minisink's library and, on one occasion, hit her, Florence ran away and went to stay with a friend named Virginia Miller, an older woman who had been raised by Earlene Gardner and her mother. Mrs. Gardner begged her to come back, and she did, temporarily, because, she says now, "of all the people in my life then, she was the one I took to best."

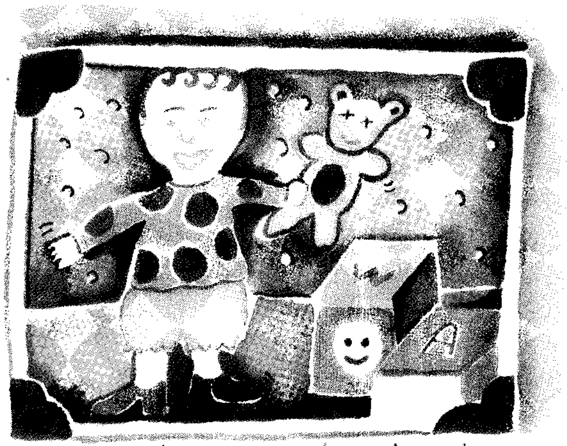


Mrs. Gardner had found it necessary to call the police on several occasions in order to insure her own safety as well as Florence's. As Florence got older, she learned that Mr. Gardner was accustomed to beating his wife. Once, when Florence was in her room, she heard her foster mother crying, "Stop, Benjamin! Stop, Benjamin! Benjamin, no!" As she recalls it, she went into Mrs. Gardner's bedroom, saw that Mr. Gardner had her down on the floor, went to the kitchen and got the cast-iron frying pan, and said, "If you ever put your hands on Mommy again, I'm going to kill you."

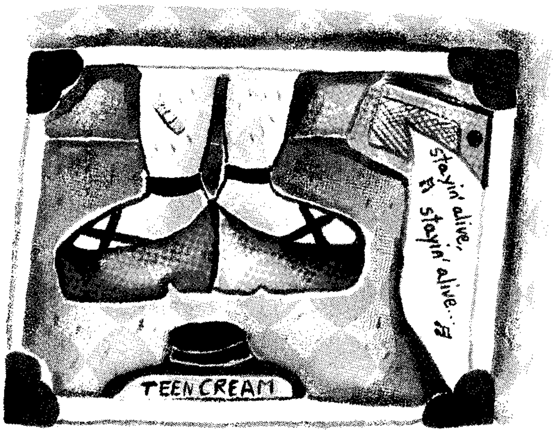
Florence spent a few days in June with Virginia Miller, and was then placed in the home of Shirley and Monroe Patten, an elderly couple in Yonkers, who also had a ten-year-old foster daughter, Dawn. For a time, Sheltering Arms considered the placement satisfactory—Mrs. Patten helped Florence acquire the habit of a daily bath and the use of deodorant, and supervised the selection of more appropriate clothes—but Florence was required to perform numerous household chores, while Dawn did nothing. She felt like an outsider, secondary to the spoiled, dependent Dawn, and stole money from Dawn's coin bank and from Mrs. Patten's bureau drawer. The agency arranged for visits at the office by Florence and Mrs. Gardner. Mrs. Patten accepted this arrangement. What she didn't understand was Lavinia Wilson's lack of interest in her daughter: in a year, Lavinia telephoned only once.

Florence completed the eleventh grade at Yonkers High School, lost twenty pounds (Shirley Patten was a good cook but put her on a diet), and missed city life. She had dated her first boy, and he had introduced her to drugs,

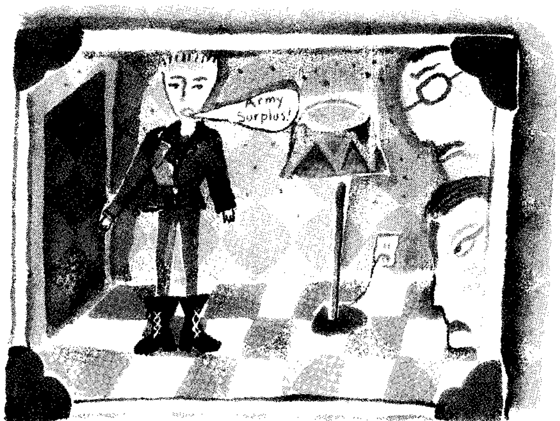
And now a walk down memory lane: The shoes I've known and loved.



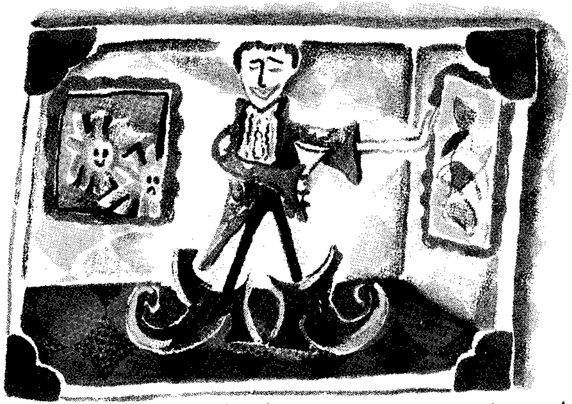
Baby's first cha-cha heels—I knew I was born to dance.


Stayin' alive, ♫ stayin' alive... ♫
TEEN CREAM

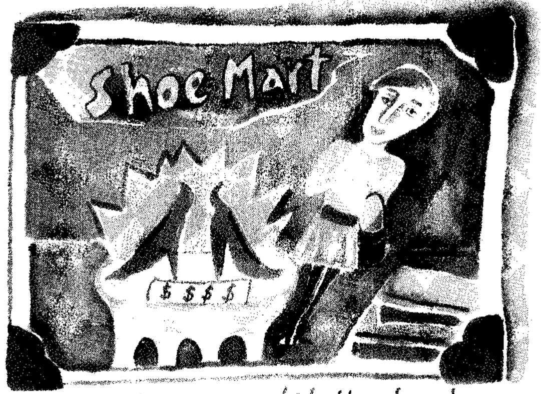
A pubescent fantasy come true—four-inch wedgie platforms. Where are they now?


Army Surplus!

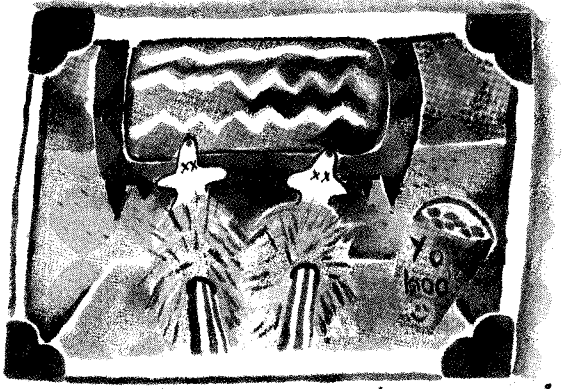
Socially conscious yet stylish combat boots. Mom and Dad didn't understand.



My red velvet baroque party shoes with Venetian heels—bunions eventually drove us apart.



The gold lamé stiletto-heel pumps that got away—I still think of them.



My furry bedroom slippers with novelty toes—they made me laugh.

S. Skalisky

while she was with Virginia the previous summer. As soon as school was over, in June of 1968, she left the Pattens' house, without telling them or Sheltering Arms of her plans. She went to Virginia's home for a weekend, and then spent several weeks with another foster sister while initial arrangements were being made for Virginia's home to be certified as a temporary foster home for her. On July 29, 1968, the agency asked Lavinia Wilson, who was on vacation from her job, if she could provide a home for Florence for a brief period, since foster homes were not plentiful for girls of Florence's age, and she was regarded as too wholesome to be put in a group home. Lavinia agreed to think about it for a few days.

On August 2nd, Lavinia telephoned Sheltering Arms. She flatly refused to become involved, or to take Florence even overnight, suggesting that the agency place her "where someone can make her finish school and then she can go out and get work." Lavinia spoke of the problems of teen-agers, late hours, and going wild, and attributed the failure of Florence's placement with the Pattens (which she had heard about from Mrs. Gardner) to Florence. Florence was devastated, and said to her caseworker that she hated Lavinia—she referred to her as Lavinia, not as Mother—and resented her obvious favoritism toward Clifford and Samuel. One reason Sheltering Arms certified Virginia as a foster mother for Florence was that in the agency's judgment Florence's real ties were to the Gardners' extended family.

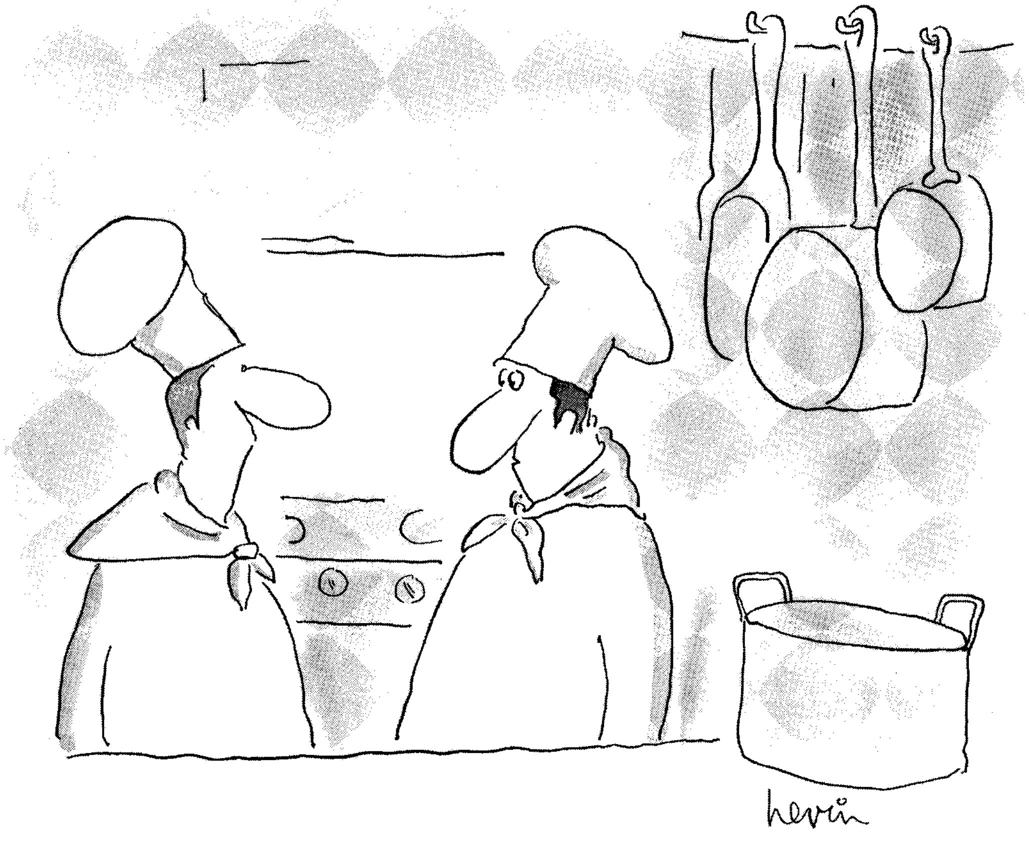
Soon after Florence moved in with Virginia Miller, she met Wesley, and became pregnant during the spring of her senior year of high school. While she was pregnant, it seemed that she might need surgery for removal of a breast mass, and Lavinia Wilson's signature was required on a hospital operation consent form. When a caseworker spoke to Lavinia, in June, she asked, "Who's going to pay for it?" When she was told that the Bureau of Child Welfare would pay, she agreed to sign the form. According to the worker, "She seemed very much removed from Florence and what she was going through."

Florence's high-school attendance was poor during her senior year, and she had to take three courses in summer school; she graduated with a commercial diploma in August of 1969. The agency recommended that she move to a home for unwed mothers in October, 1969. Her case at Sheltering Arms was closed in March of the following year.

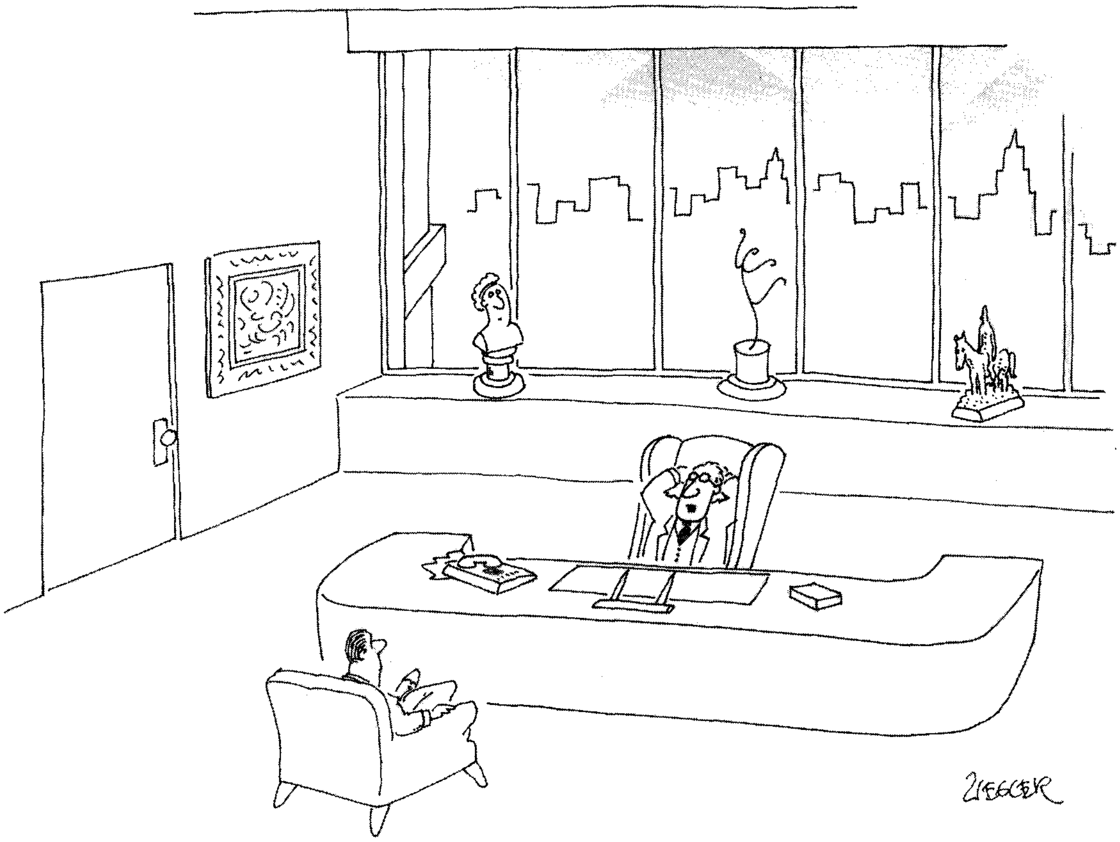
THOUGH Florence envied her brothers because they were never in foster care, Clifford and Samuel hadn't had idyllic childhoods, either. The boys had to go to church with Lavinia every day. They were often beaten by the women who were "tarrying"—talking to God on their knees with their eyes closed, saying "Alleluia!" and "Praise be the Lord!" When the women rose to their feet, they would hit Clifford and Samuel. On their way to church, Lavinia, Clifford, and Samuel sometimes passed Sylvester Drummond, a tall, thin man who looked to Clifford "more Hispanic than black." He used to hug Clifford and give both boys money for ice cream, but Lavinia always pulled them away from him, saying "He's no good." When Clifford asked if the man was his father, she said, "I don't want to talk about him," and "The case is closed."

Clifford had a problem controlling his bladder and often wet his pants on the way to church. He says that one night when he was about seven, Lavinia told him she had to punish him. She told him to go into the bathroom and drop his pants. While he held his genitals, she burned them with three kitchen matches, and then with three more matches, and then with three more. He still remembers the sight of the nine matches in the toilet. He remembers screaming. He remembers thinking that the real reason his mother injured him was that he reminded her of his father. Later, Clifford sought out a doctor at Harlem Hospital, and the doctor agreed to treat him without asking questions. Clifford didn't want his mother put in jail, nor did he want her to know that he required skin grafts and was having reconstructive surgery. He never told Samuel what Lavinia had done to him.

During their years at the



"Wanna do lunch?"



"I used to be known as Mr. Nice Guy, but I bought my way out."

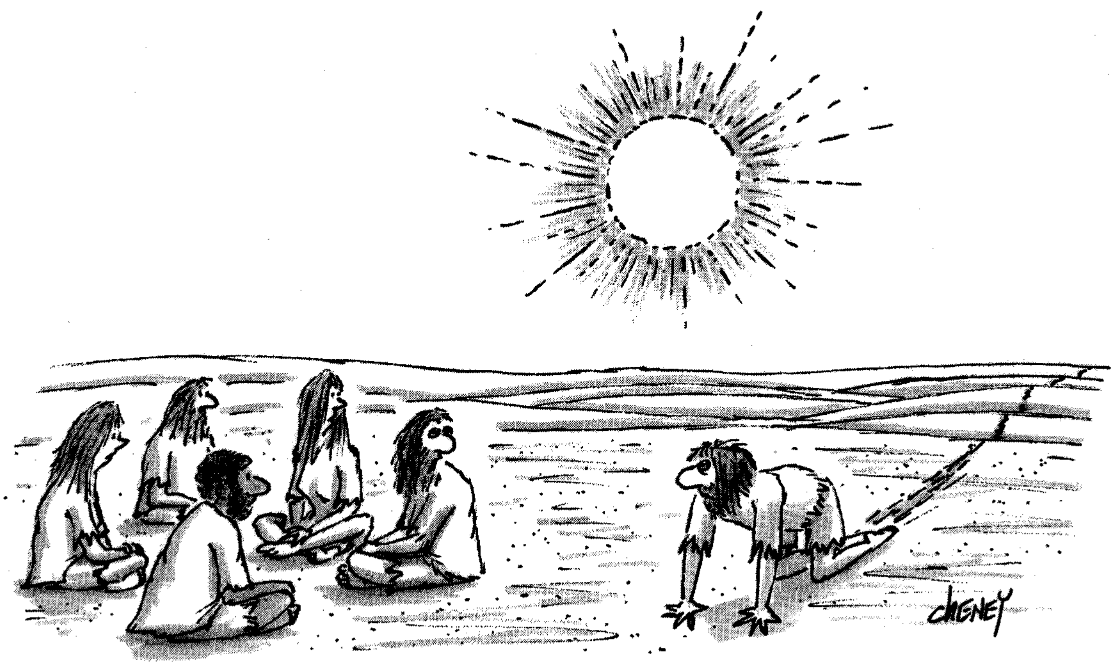
boarding school, the boys endured daily chapel and hours of church and revival meetings on Saturdays and Sundays—and a great deal of corporal punishment. Clifford was ten years old when they were sent there, and Samuel was seven. Samuel remembers that while he was stretched across a table someone on one side of the table beat him with switches and someone on the other side hit him with a razor strop. He was often tied to a chair with his back to a pole. Many nights, the mattress was taken off his bed, and he was tied to the springs. If Clifford cut him loose, both were beaten, and Samuel was tied to the bed again the next night. Both boys were periodically put in tubs of cold water with their hands and feet tied together behind their backs. Once, after being hog-tied and dumped in cold water, Samuel caught pneumonia. He was slipped into a nearby town, admitted to a doctor's office by the back door, and then taken to the hospital. For a while after that, he was treated nicely, but the whippings soon resumed. He and Clifford threatened to run away.

In 1964, when Clifford and Samuel returned from boarding school for the summer, they were able to persuade Lavinia not to send them back, because they really would run away. Toward the end of 1966, Samuel accidentally set fire to one of the rooms in Lavinia's tenement. All the family's belongings were lost. Lavinia and the boys moved to two rooms several blocks from their former lodgings, and later to an apartment on Jerome Avenue in the upper west Bronx. It was Lavinia's first real apartment—she had always lived as a roomer in other people's homes—and she was very proud of it. She obtained a bank loan through her employer in order to pay for furniture, was attending night school, and hoped some year to obtain a high-school diploma. A Sheltering Arms caseworker had observed that Lavinia's ability to read and write was limited.

After the boys' return from boarding school, Samuel went to junior high school and Clifford to high school. They ate grits and bacon and cereal for several years while Lavinia paid off their school bill, and resented the preachers at Lavinia's church, who ate steak. Clifford remembers that his mother celebrated making the final boarding-school payment by sending out for Chinese food.

In the fall of 1967, Lavinia didn't like the way Samuel was behaving. He fought with his teachers and his high-school classmates or played hooky; he was caught by the police riding in a car that had been stolen by one of his friends; he infuriated her by asking questions about his father. She took him to court, thinking that a threat of removal from home might make him respond to her discipline. It didn't, and in July of 1968 Samuel was committed by the court to Hawthorne Cedar Knolls School, a residential treatment center for emotionally disturbed adolescents in Westchester County. Samuel didn't have a bad time at Hawthorne; during his year there, he went to school, received therapy, learned to drive a backhoe, a bus, and a dump truck, and how to cook. In the summer of 1969, when he was sixteen and was ready to leave Hawthorne—he missed the city—he was given a choice of completing his high-school education or receiving vocational training. He chose to study industrial electricity. Though he has never been able to obtain his General Equivalency Diploma, he has been employed fairly steadily ever since he made that choice. Clifford dropped out of high school after completing the eleventh grade, and has also been unable to obtain his G.E.D.

Sometime during the ten years Lavinia worked as a housecleaner, she met a man named Rufus Parker, who drove the youngest child of her employers to school. Despite being "saved," and despite her church's disapproval of sexual relations outside marriage, she had sex with him. Clifford remembers seeing his feet in socks in Lavinia's bed before



"Sorry, no water. We're just a support group."

• •

Cynthia's birth, and Samuel remembers seeing him there afterward.

Lavinia was "silenced" by her church for a year after Cynthia's birth: she was expelled from the choir, and had to sit at the back. She never rejoined the choir but resumed sitting in the second row. She didn't return to domestic work after Cynthia's birth. She stayed home, babysitting for the children of working mothers until Cynthia was old enough for school, and then went on welfare. In 1978, after their apartment in the Bronx was condemned, Lavinia and Cynthia moved to a housing project in Astoria, Queens. Samuel and Clifford had moved out in 1970, not long after Cynthia was born.

Lavinia has a photograph of herself with Cynthia, Crystal, and Wesley Taylor, taken on Crystal's fifth birthday. After 1976, Florence hardly saw her mother. Lavinia knew that she had become involved in drugs, and says she was frightened of her life style. Clifford and Samuel lost track of Florence after 1982, when she left Sheridan Avenue.

Children's Village, where Carlos and Matthew were sent in July of 1986, was founded in 1851, as the New York Juvenile Asylum, to shelter and educate vagrant immigrant children living on the streets of Manhattan. In 1901, the agency bought several hundred acres of land on a wooded hilltop in Dobbs Ferry, ten miles north of the city; the staff and children made the journey there by horse-drawn wagon. Today, more than three hundred boys, between the ages of five and sixteen, live at Children's Village, the nation's largest residential treatment center for emotionally handicapped boys. The boys are admitted primarily from four places: from more restricted settings, such as psychiatric hospitals; from homes where substance abuse, sexual abuse, and other forms of violence prevail; from homes with no abuse, but where some kind of assistance is needed; and from foster homes (some boys have been in as many as fifteen)—as Carlos and Matthew were, in July of 1986, when Carlos was close to his tenth birthday and Matthew was about to turn nine. Children's Village has been known to accept boys rejected by as many as fourteen other agencies. Currently, fifty per cent of the residents are black, thirty per cent Hispanic, twenty per cent white and "other." They are housed in twenty-one "cottages," staffed around the clock. Upon arrival, each boy is evaluated by a multidisciplinary team, and an individualized treatment plan is designed for him. Most of the boys meet frequently with a social worker and a psychologist or psychiatrist. Most attend a year-round school on campus, which offers special-education classes, with a low teacher-to-student ratio. In addition to emotional and behavioral problems, the boys tend to have learning disabilities and to be several years behind grade level.

The staff at the group home where Crystal was living in 1986 did not pursue Florence. In January, Crystal reached the age of sixteen; in April, her discharge goal was changed, from discharge to biological mother to discharge to independent living. Fifty per cent of the boys at Children's Village do return to a relative—Carlos and Matthew's goal. There is pressure on the agency to discharge residents within two years, and to involve parents in making a success of the treatment and in expediting the discharge, partly because the cost of maintaining a boy at Children's Village is about fifty thousand dollars a year. In February, 1987, Florence told Carlos and Matthew about Michael's birth—they took the news calmly—and signed a contract agreeing to attend a special weekly training course in parent skills at Children's Village. The contract read, "I will seek help and remain drug free, I will seek appropriate housing for myself and my children, I will apply for public assistance." (Florence had been taken off welfare when her children went into foster care.) "I understand that my failure to adhere to the above listed rules may result in termination of my parental rights."

Between March and June of 1987, Florence's attendance at the family-training sessions with Carlos and Matthew was inconsistent, and she occasionally appeared to be under the influence of alcohol: she always denied she had been drinking. Although she was briefly in another detoxification program that spring, she also denied any drug use. Nevertheless, she showed up with reasonable frequency and made a sufficient effort in the therapy sessions to be recognized at a graduation luncheon in June. At an early session, Florence confronted Carlos about his claims that she had taken him on drug deals and had him engage in sex with men for money. Carlos said he had lied. The child-care and social workers who were to work with him over the following years did not believe his denial.

That June, Florence, Carlos, and Crystal went to a state park on a picnic organized by Children's Village. In July, Florence continued to show up for family-therapy sessions, visited the boys on Sundays, and took them out for their birthdays. In August, she came two and a half hours late to one appointment and missed another. On August 19th, the boys' social worker asked her why she hadn't shown up on the twelfth. She said that when she was still dealing drugs, before her latest detoxification program, she had skipped with her supplier's drugs without paying, and had been dodging him ever since. He had finally caught up with her the previous week. He had beaten her and she had gone to the emergency room. She hadn't wanted the boys to see her so bruised. She was still slightly bruised on the nineteenth, under her eye and around her mouth. The social worker recorded what Florence said, and added that her demeanor and appearance had changed. The social worker was concerned that Florence was back into drugs. Florence wasn't seen at Children's Village during the month of September. In mid-October, she telephoned to say that things were going badly for her, and she still didn't come to Dobbs Ferry. In late October, her S.S.C. worker called Children's Village to say that Florence had also missed appointments with her and with Natasha, James, and Michael. Florence saw the younger children in November, but appeared helpless and hopeless about her situation—and high. That month, she told Carlos and Matthew that she couldn't give them a good Thanksgiving and would honor whatever decision they made about the holiday. The boys spent it with members of the staff at Children's Village. Florence had Thanksgiving dinner with Crystal at Crystal's group home. Crystal's psychologist noted (as he had often done before) that Crystal's mental status fluctuated with her mother's status. Crystal was having a difficult time because of her mother's condition and living arrangements—and so were Florence's other children.

The drug scene in which Florence had existed for a dozen years changed for her in September, 1987, after she started using crack. The drug affected her differently from heroin and cocaine: it made her high too quickly; it made her heart beat too fast. The world of crack was more violent and more sinister; she was frightened by the sight of crack dealers being held up and shot, and concluded that if she started selling crack she would wind up either in jail or dead. The increasing popularity of crack also deprived her of a living: users in her neighborhood were less interested in buying heroin and ordinary cocaine, which she had been selling for years. Because she had no money, she had to stay in Clarence's room all day. Clarence's landlord proposed raising his rent from two hundred dollars a month to four hundred dollars. He hadn't wanted Florence there in the first place: Florence was the first of Clarence's women Clarence had allowed to stay overnight. By then, Clarence himself had become fed up with supporting Florence's drug habit. He paid the landlord a little extra money, but he threatened to move out of the room on Grant Avenue and sleep at the nursing home where he worked.

Florence had recently heard of a residential drug-treatment program, Phoenix House, and told her S.S.C. worker she was ready to get away from drugs for good. The only way she could imagine kicking her habit was to move out of the old neighborhood. The first interview the worker could get at Phoenix House was in January of 1988. In early December, Florence was interviewed by Odyssey House. Two days later, she was accepted into its residential program. The worker had secured a bed for Florence at a shelter, because homeless adults are given priority in entering programs like Odyssey House, which tend to have waiting lists.

On December 10, 1987, when Florence went to Children's Village to tell

"We're really, really interested. Now take it home and make it sing."

"BRAM STOKER'S BAMBI"

Carlos and Matthew and their social worker about her imminent entry into Odyssey House's adult program, she talked non-stop and repeated herself endlessly. The boys appeared uncomfortable listening to her rambling speech, but said they were relieved that she would at least have a place to live and would not be "on the streets." Florence had deliberately got herself high, because she knew that that would be her last high from drugs. She didn't go to the shelter, but spent the night with Clarence. The next day, she moved into an Odyssey House building on Ward's Island. She was assigned to a room with six bunk beds. She went cold turkey. The first three days were the roughest: she was depressed and tired—she wanted only to sleep. After that, she felt better.

FLORENCE was older than most people who enter the Odyssey House program for adolescents and adults: she was approaching thirty-seven in December, 1987. She had consequently been on drugs longer than most of those on Ward's Island with her. Once she had gone cold turkey, she never used cocaine or heroin again; all the urine tests randomly given to her afterward came back negative. Fifty-three per cent of those who enter the program leave voluntarily (many because they are unable to keep away from drugs) or are dismissed for unacceptable behavior, such as "sexual acting out." Even passing notes, kissing, and winking result in a disciplinary talk. The dropout rate is highest during the first three months.

A critical part of Odyssey House's drug-rehabilitation program is to make residents confront the reasons for their addiction. Most of them have led lives of deprivation. A significant percentage have been physically abused, sexually abused, or severely neglected. Sixty-eight per cent of the adults in the program are second- or third-generation substance abusers. Seventy-five per cent of the female residents have children in the foster-care system or living with grandmothers. According to the president of Odyssey House, the men who fathered these children perceive their role as impregnating the women and carrying around photographs of the children in their pockets. Ten per cent of the residents are white, sixteen per cent Hispanic, the remainder black. Virtually all are poor. Odyssey House receives state and federal funds, but most residents qualify for public assistance, as Florence did. Their welfare checks pay for their room and board, and they are permitted to keep a small personal allowance from this payment.

Residents move through various levels toward graduation. Each level carries with it different restrictions, responsibilities, and privileges, which must be earned. When Florence was a Level I, she required a peer—someone else in the program at Level I—and an escort from Level III to accompany her when she went out. Only when she got to Level III could she go out alone. Level I's may write letters to their families; Level II's may make telephone calls to and receive visits from members of their immediate families. Level III's may get in touch with non-family members, visit their families with peers, and go on outings with them. Visiting one's children is regarded as a responsibility, so Florence was permitted from the outset to go with a peer and an escort to Children's Village to see her older boys and to the offices of the Child Welfare Administration's Division of Adoption and Foster Care Services to see her three younger children. (In 1988, S.S.C. became C.W.A.)

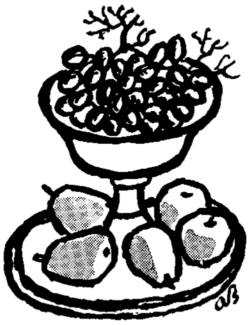
Florence is a guarded person. When she is questioned about her life, she finds it easiest to say "I don't remember," although she has an excellent selective memory. She tends to dismiss many questions with "I don't know" when she knows the answer but does not like it. In therapy groups, Florence was a good listener but a poor talker. Although her primary reason for entering Odyssey House was to get her children out of foster care as quickly as possible, it was many months before she was able to open up to others and deal with her feelings about herself, her family, and other people who had played a significant part in her past. Most Odyssey House residents who don't fall by the wayside during the first three months graduate from Odyssey House after a stay of between eighteen and twenty-four months. It took Florence two and a half years to graduate.

It became apparent early on that the main issue troubling Florence was the anger she still felt toward her mother for letting her be raised in foster care, and the anger and guilt she felt toward herself for having followed in her mother's footsteps. She was required to submit weekly self-evaluation notes to her therapist at every level. And in a note in May, 1988, in regard to Lavinia, she wrote, "I'm angry at the way she abuse me and now just like she did me I did to my children with the drugs." In mid-July, she wrote that she hoped "to see mother, sister, brothers soon and to let her know I still love her but was hurt by fact I had to be raised in foster home," and added, "I also want to let her know how it played a big part in me using drugs and how it is affecting my children now."

Florence reached Level I in February of 1988, and Level II in April. All program residents have jobs. Her Level I job was in the laundry. The staff believed she was isolating herself there; she was described until graduation as someone not given to socializing. Her Level II job was in the Admissions Department, which was in two four-story attached brownstones on East Sixth Street that housed the Odyssey House adolescent program. She remained on East Sixth Street, a site she preferred, until she completed the program.

Florence had not been permitted to bring her telephone-and-address book to Odyssey House, so in the summer of 1988 she no longer had her mother's or her brothers' addresses or phone numbers, but she knew how to find her mother when she was ready to do so. On a Sunday in late August, together with a peer and an escort, Florence went up to the fundamentalist church in Harlem. She had no trouble finding her mother at the front of the church, where she always sat and sometimes stood, moving rhythmically to the music, punctuating the preachers' sermons with "Amen"s, and putting bills in the collection plates, which were usually passed five times during the Sunday service.

A week later, Lavinia, Clifford, Samuel, and Cynthia came to visit Florence on East Sixth Street. Florence's Level II therapist had told her just to discuss her uncles, aunts, nieces, and cousins, but Florence lost no time in confronting her mother about the past, and told her that on the next visit she wanted to see her alone. When Florence reproached Lavinia for letting her be raised in other people's houses, Lavinia told her that she hadn't chosen to put Florence in foster care and that she had sent Clifford and Samuel away because she couldn't bear raising them alone, without Florence. After four or five visits in the summer of 1988, Lavinia Wilson stopped visiting Odyssey House: Florence believes that Lavinia didn't care for her lines of inquiry. Florence reached Level III in November of 1988.



Lavinia's rejection continued to haunt her, and by April of 1989 Florence's commitment to therapy and her quest for the truth had deepened. One Sunday in April, she went up to Lavinia's church again. "My mother didn't greet me with open arms which I kind of knew she wouldn't," Florence wrote in a self-evaluation note. "And just by her actions toward me I now realize that she is not going to be the mother I want her to be. I felt like an outcast, someone she just had and that's it. I don't know why it meant so much to me to have my mother's love and to be accepted by her. Now . . . I know it's never going to happen."

Florence confronted Lavinia about her refusal to take her in even for a night after she left the Pattens'. Lavinia said the agency had never asked her to do that. Florence was sure she was lying, because her caseworker at Sheltering Arms had told her what really happened on July 29th and August 2nd of 1968.

When Lavinia came to see Florence at Odyssey House in 1988, Florence had asked her to bring her some homemade chicken and some macaroni salad. Instead, Lavinia brought her Kentucky Fried Chicken she had bought. "I asked her why," Clifford says. "I asked her, 'Don't you love Florence? Isn't she your daughter?' She changed the subject real quick."

Lavinia maintains that the judge who removed Florence from her care wanted her raised in a home with a mother and a father. There is no evidence in Florence's record at Sheltering Arms that this is true, but Lavinia often says, "Look how much better the two I raised are than the one that was raised with a father and mother."

In 1988, Lavinia informed Florence and Clifford of Sylvester Drummond's death. Clifford concluded that she had known his father's whereabouts all along and had simply chosen not to reveal them. In 1989, Florence no longer remembered living in Memphis, but in 1961 she had told a caseworker at Sheltering Arms that she called her grandmother Grandma, that there were many people in her grandma's house, and that it was a very happy home. She said she had enjoyed eating a rice dish called mulattos, that she had entered kindergarten in the South, and that her father, Mr. Drummond—who was called Syl by others but Daddy by her—used to take her out while she was on the farm. In 1961, Lavinia Wilson also told the caseworker that when Florence lived on the farm she lived with her father, and that Sylvester Drummond was Lavinia's stepsister's husband. It was the worker's impression that Clifford and Florence were born while he was married to the stepsister. As a caseworker had noted on another occasion, Miss Wilson presents herself in the manner "of a child who holds a very big secret."

Samuel Wilson has never seen his father and knows nothing about him except his name. "You just don't want me to have a father," Samuel once said to Lavinia, in anger. His mother's answer was "I don't want anything less than going to church." Cynthia Wilson saw her father every now and then until she was nine, when she and Lavinia moved to Astoria. She hasn't seen him since. "I thank God that my children have stopped asking me about their fathers," Lavinia Wilson says. "I like being the mother *and* the father. All men are dogs."

IN therapy at Odyssey House, Florence had to resolve another substantive issue in her life—the relationships with the three fathers of her children. She readily acknowledged that two of the relationships were not good. Wesley Taylor, the father of Crystal, Carlos, and Matthew, was her Pied Piper to drugs. "He didn't make me start using, but when I wanted to get off drugs he was the one pushing me further and further on drugs," she wrote. "Now he is strung out real bad." She had next to nothing to say about Leonard, Natasha's father. In the spring of 1982, when she was thirty-one, she had caught the twenty-one-year-old Leonard in Crystal's bedroom one day upon returning home unexpectedly. She was furious. At the same time that she believed Leonard was sexually involved with Crystal, who was then twelve, Florence was pregnant with Leonard's child; she felt betrayed by both Leonard and Crystal.

She felt differently about Clarence, the father of James and Michael. During the February after she came to Ward's Island, she said she missed getting her annual Valentine's Day card from him. That May, she reminisced that "this time last year he brought me a whole outfit for Mother's Day and I had dinner." Florence came to regret her treatment of Clarence, with whom she believed she had had a good relationship but one she had exploited. "I stole from him, lied to him, I did whatever it took just for drugs," she wrote. "The more he gave the more I wasn't satisfy." At first, Florence wondered if the feelings she and Clarence had formerly had for each other were still there. She subsequently said she learned in group that Clarence, whom she had considered "a father figure" (Clarence is twenty-eight years older than Florence), was nothing but "an enabler" for her drug habit. That wasn't the type of relationship she wanted with a man when she left the program.

Florence admitted in therapy at Odyssey House that she had been "a very sick mother"—the same words she used there to describe Lavinia. She resolved to make up for the years her children had spent in foster care as a consequence of her neglect, and for her failure to visit them after they were placed. "I knew the minimum I had to do to prevent the kids from being permanently taken away and being put out for adoption," she says. "And I did just the minimum."

From the time Florence started Pre-Treatment on Ward's Island, her first Odyssey House counsellor had agreed that she could continue to go to Children's Village for weekly family-therapy sessions with Carlos and Matthew. Crystal saw Florence every now and then, depending on her school or work schedule and the amount of time she was devoting to her boyfriends. Florence has never confronted her about Leonard, and though they have their ups and downs, Crystal and Florence are fond of each other.

Florence was more concerned about the three younger children, especially the two boys—James, who had gone into foster care at the age of one, and Michael, who had gone into care directly from the hospital. "My last two sons I never even saw them grow up, or start walking or even cutting their first teeths," she wrote in a self-evaluation note in May, 1988.

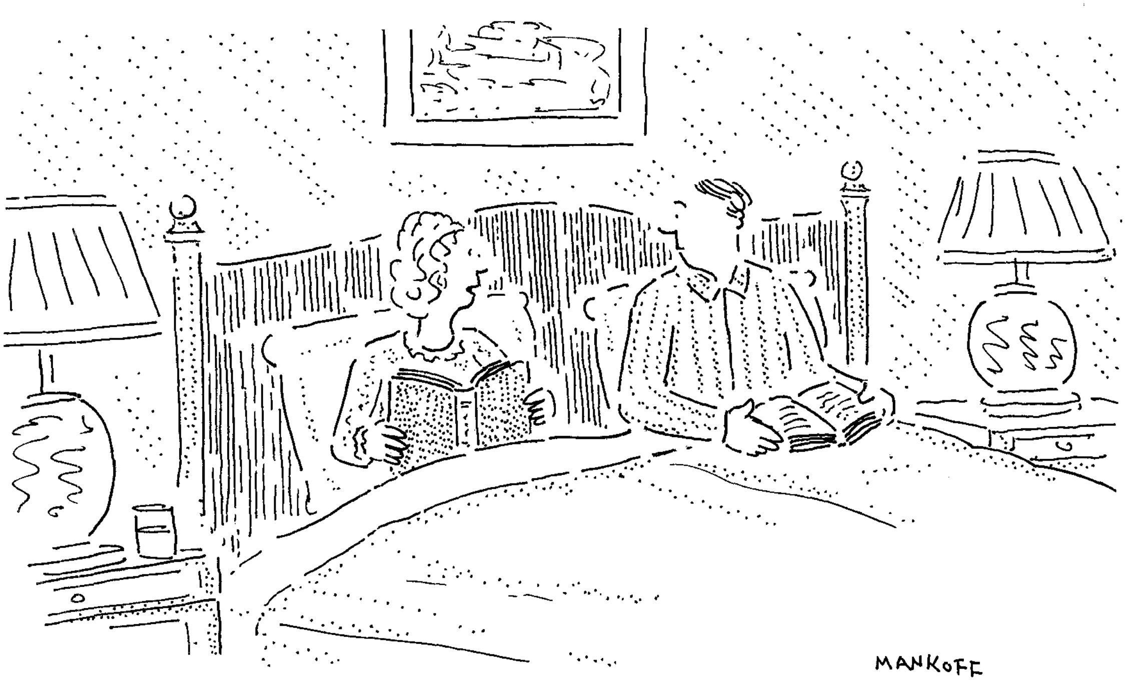
Before foster parents are certified, they must agree to let birth parents see the children in their care regularly—usually once a week. The Child Welfare Administration's caseworkers for the children are supposed to arrange these visits. In the case of Florence's children, visits took place either in the Brooklyn office (Michael's foster mother, Geraldine Kent, lived in the Cobble Hill section of Brooklyn) or in the Queens office (Natasha's foster parents, Grace and Herbert Dunbar, lived in Springfield Gardens, Queens). Although James had been placed in the Bronx in 1986, his case was never transferred there from Brooklyn, so visits with him were also supposed to take place in Brooklyn but seldom did, because his foster mother found the long subway trip difficult. Toward the end of 1989, Florence prevailed upon C.W.A. to transfer James to a family in the Bronx that was amenable to bringing him on visits.

The children's C.W.A. workers changed rapidly. Whenever a worker left and a new one was assigned, weeks often passed before a visiting schedule was again established, despite the willingness of the foster parents to adhere to the visiting rules. Florence was troubled that Michael didn't recognize her and that neither of the younger boys was warm to her at first, although she acknowledged that she had no one to blame for the situation but herself.

When Carlos first came to Children's Village, in July, 1986, he had often been described as sneaky, moody, and depressed. By January of 1988, he had made significant progress. His social workers noted that he regressed only when Florence failed to keep appointments. He occasionally lied or was manipulative, but he was one of the most popular boys in his cottage. Matthew, although he was only ten months younger than Carlos, was babyish: he wet his bed, had frequent temper tantrums, and was afraid of the dark. Carlos, who tended to protect Matthew, was more accessible: he talked openly about his emotions, and he acknowledged Florence's drug addiction. Matthew was closemouthed about his problems and his mother's, and most reluctant to talk to adults. It was difficult for him to verbalize his feelings, but, unlike Carlos, who had been found to be learning-disabled and was behind grade level, Matthew was able to go to a public school in Dobbs Ferry and was never left back.

By early 1988, the behavior of both boys had improved so much since their arrival at Children's Village that the agency was prepared to discharge them. Carlos and Matthew realized that Florence's drug rehabilitation might take a long time or might not work out. They said they wanted to live with their sister Natasha's foster parents, Grace and Herbert Dunbar, who had offered them a home. It took many months for C.W.A. to approve the transfer—the agency tends to act slowly—but on February 28, 1989, Carlos and Matthew moved to the Dunbars'.

The Dunbars were then in their early sixties, and had been foster parents for twenty years. Mr. Dunbar, who worked for the Department of Corrections, is an old-fashioned man who prides himself on the fact that his wife has never had to work outside the house. They had raised Mrs. Dunbar's two sons, who are now in their forties, and a daughter. The Dunbars were eager to adopt one child who had been placed with them, but he was given to his grandmother—a placement that Mr. Dunbar did not approve of, because the woman lived in an untidy three-room apartment and "already had



"Why, you're right. Tonight isn't reading night, tonight is sex night."

• •

three other grands." Mr. Dunbar had been abandoned by his parents and placed in an orphanage at the age of five. "I was foster," he says. "I really missed a mother and a father, and I miss that to this day. Several people were good to me when I was coming up. I see foster care as a way of helping my people."

In 1969, four sisters, ranging in age from three to nine, came to the Dunbars from another foster home. In 1980, after the death of Mrs. Dunbar's daughter, the couple took in their eight-year-old granddaughter. She is now a college student. Three of the four sisters stayed for a number of years (the other didn't behave, and moved out), and Mrs. Dunbar is still in contact with them. "I get my cards on Mother's Day, they send, they bring, they come," she says.

When Natasha was transferred to the Dunbars' from Mrs. Peoples' home, in Crown Heights, in 1986, Mrs. Dunbar unpacked her clothes in the back yard and shook them out, a procedure she followed with all new foster children. "I didn't have roaches and I didn't want roaches," she says. "Natasha had been in a typical foster home. Her clothes were ridiculous. The whites hadn't been washed with the whites, and the colors with the colors, so everything had run in together. She was a typical toddler. I couldn't keep a fan on the floor or flowers in a vase without her upsetting them, but toddlers are always touching and feeling—that's how they learn. It was up to me to see that her fingers didn't get tied up in a fan or her hands burned on the stove. That's a parent's job. Natasha wasn't well behaved when we got her, but she was a bright little girl and she wasn't no real trouble, and soon she was very good."

Natasha excelled in school. The Dunbars ordered Dr. Seuss books for her from a children's book club, bought her dictionaries, a bookcase, and a blackboard, and had the neighborhood candy store reserve a copy of a children's newspaper for her. From the bottom of the staircase they could hear Natasha in her bedroom teaching her dolls to read. Mrs. Dunbar was faithful about taking Natasha (and, later, Carlos and Matthew) to the C.W.A. office in Queens, and occasionally to the Brooklyn office to see Florence along with her other children. Once Florence had progressed enough at Odyssey House to be able to travel alone, they invited her to their home. "I never had no parents of foster kids come to the house except Florence, because I liked her," Mrs. Dunbar says. "When she said she would come, she would come. You set the table, she would sit and eat and not hurry. She stood next to our piano and sang. She had people who had cared for her." The Dunbars had no idea that Florence had been in foster care.

WHEN Carlos and Matthew moved to the Dunbars', it was apparent that Natasha scarcely remembered them and wasn't happy to have them join her. "They came from a place with rough boys," Mrs. Dunbar says. The Dunbars gave Carlos and Matthew their downstairs bedroom ("The girls were upstairs with us, and boys and girls don't mix under our roof") and had no immediate problems with them. They were friendly, they did the yard work and other assigned chores, they were respectful. Although Matthew struck them as more intelligent, they preferred Carlos. "Carlos was neat," Mrs. Dunbar says. "Matthew had some nasty habits. He wouldn't take a bath unless you dropped him into the tub." Carlos was also honest, but Matthew lied and began to steal. "You couldn't lay nothing down because if you did, Matthew was gone with it," Mrs. Dunbar says. "He took my change purse out of my bowling bag and stuffed it into his eyeglass case. I found it when he put his eyeglass case down on the dresser and I could see it looked puffed up."

Early in November of 1989, the Dunbars were startled to learn that Carlos had been playing hooky. They were told that he had missed fifteen days of school in September and five days in October. They called Florence and suggested that she go to the school and talk to the principal. "Instead of me getting upset and fussing with my son I just politely went to the school Thursday morning to talk with the principal, the dean, and the guidance counselor," Florence wrote in a self-evaluation note. Like Mrs. Dunbar, who went to the school several times herself, Florence "couldn't understand how a child was able to stay out of school for fifteen days and no one saying anything. The only reason the foster mother was notified was because when my son played hooky in Oct. one of the teachers saw him."

At the end of November, the Dunbars had another shock. Carlos came home one evening with no clothes on under his coat. He told the Dunbars that he had gone to another boy's house with some friends, while the boy's mother was at work. The other boys had made him undress—he and his friends had taken their clothes off before at such gatherings. Carlos got angry and ran out of the house. He came home trembling with cold. Mr. Dunbar took him to the police precinct and filed a complaint. All the boys involved were summoned to Family Court, but nothing came of the inquiry. The Dunbars decided that Carlos would have to go back to Children's Village. He was readmitted there on January 30, 1990.

Matthew's sneakiness and stealing increased after Carlos left, and in the spring the Dunbars told their caseworker they could no longer keep him. Their C.W.A. worker stalled. In August, Mrs. Dunbar suffered a severe stroke. Mr. Dunbar couldn't take care of foster children and his wife, who would require several months in the hospital. He called his caseworker's office and explained his predicament, and was told to go home and pack Matthew's things. On September 12, 1990, Matthew Drummond returned to Children's Village. To the Dunbars' regret, Natasha had to leave them for another foster home in Queens.

THAT summer, Florence seemed to think it was time for her children to stop playing musical foster homes and for her to take the final steps to get them home. What she needed most was a job. Odyssey House Level III's are eligible for job training (if they need it) and are permitted to work outside the program. Florence felt good when she was sent to the New York State Office of Vocational Rehabilitation for evaluation, in May, 1989. A month later, she was sent from O.V.R. to a business school run by the Federation Employment and Guidance Service, or FEGS, an organization sponsored by the United Jewish Appeal Federation of Jewish Philanthropies.

Florence had excelled at clerical work and, at FEGS, was pleased that tests showed she hadn't lost her aptitude for typing, filing, reading, or math. By the

STORYBOARD

BY MAURICE SENDAK

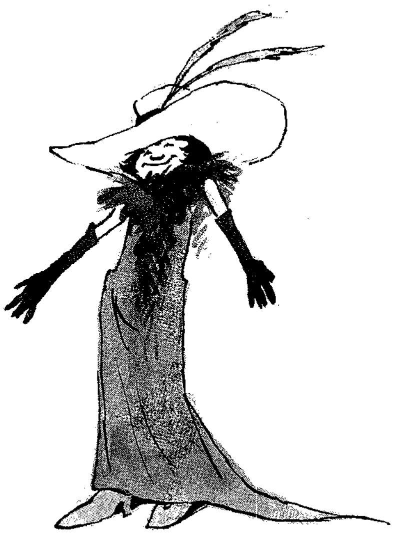
REALLY ROSIE

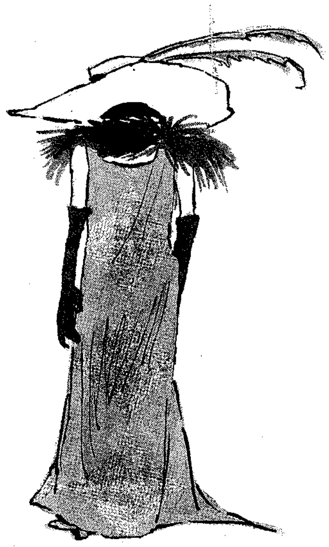
THE drawings on this page and the next provide a first glimpse of Maurice Sendak's latest and most ambitious undertaking. The eighty-plus books Sendak has illustrated and the dozen he has both written and illustrated have redefined children's literature and have helped adults see that childhood is a time of urgent learning, fierce creativity, and a constant search for meaning and love. "The great theme for any child is how to survive the next twenty-four hours," Sendak says. "This means defeating boredom, and handling the overwhelming questions of death and loss and getting mad, and then going upstairs and having supper."

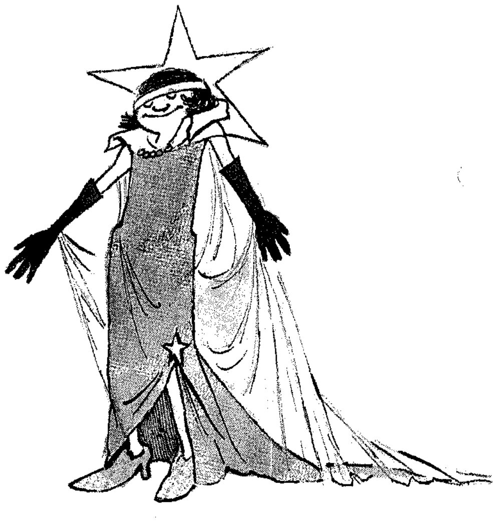
Sendak has now set out to redefine children's theatre, primarily so that he can reach an even larger audience—one that includes inner-city kids who have never learned to love books or simply can't afford to buy them. He is about to open "Really Rosie" and "So Sue Me," which are the first two productions of the Night Kitchen—a non-profit theatre team he put together two years ago to create, and then to bring to cities around the country, original plays, musicals, operas, ballets, and performance pieces for children which will be, he says, "as complicated and as fascinating as the minds of children." The Night Kitchen hopes to raise a million dollars annually, and to work with Philip Glass and Peter Schickele.

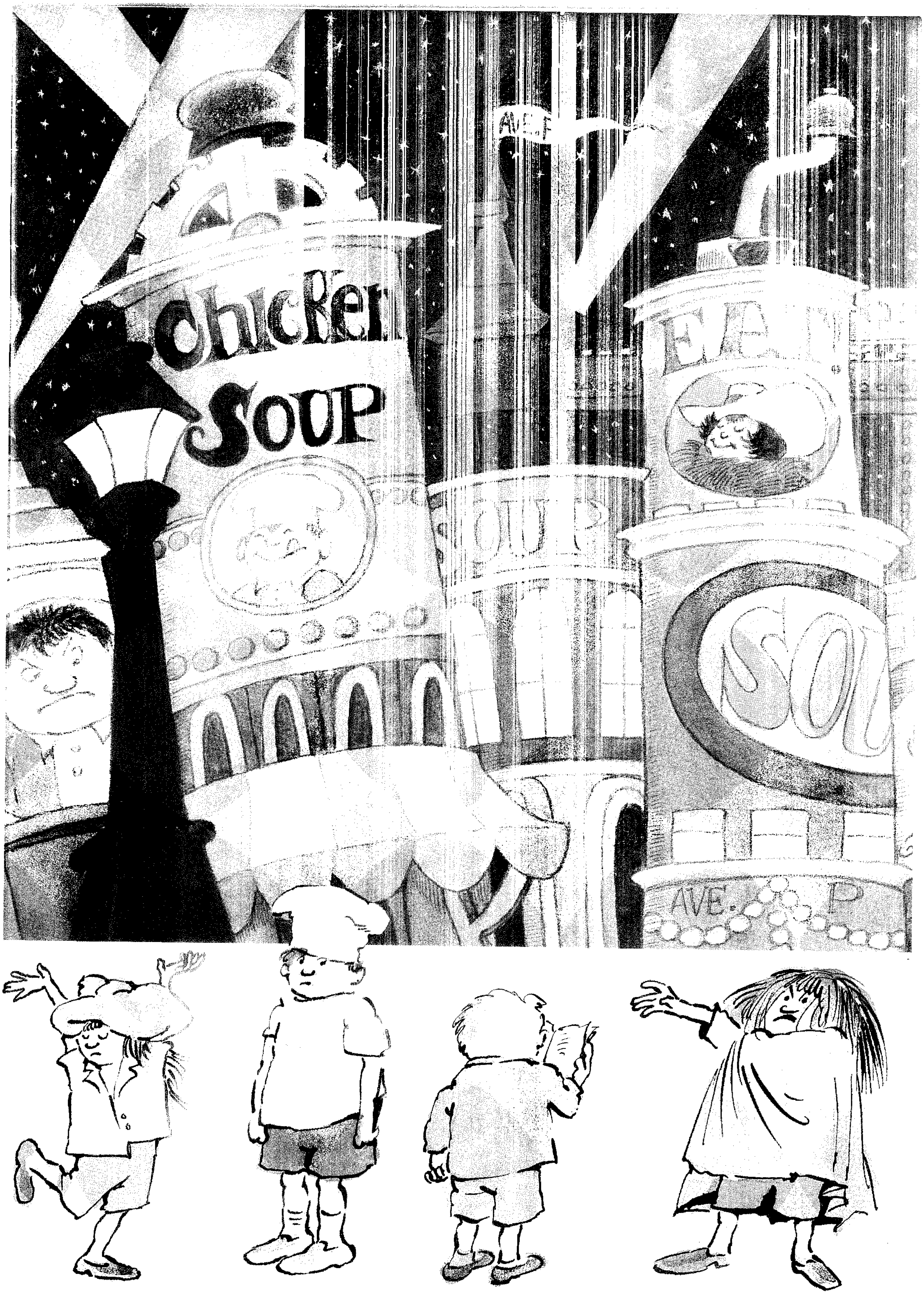
"So Sue Me," which will open in March, is a performance piece, created with Bill Irwin, that has no dialogue; in it, six men arrive to build a house, and everything that can go wrong does. The drawings here are sketches for costumes and a backdrop for "Really Rosie," a musical by Sendak and Carole King, which will be given nine initial workshop performances between January 22nd and 31st at the State University of New York's theatre in Purchase. The real Rosie, who lived across the street from Sendak when he was growing up, in Brooklyn, was a girl who conquered boredom every day, no matter what.

Tickets are still available for some performances. —TONY HISS








AVE. F
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"You have an air of Camille Paglia about you."

time she reached Level IV, in July of 1989, she was in school all day brushing up on a few rusty skills. In October, she officially completed school. Her job-placement counsellor at FEGS began to send her out on job interviews. There were numerous applicants for each secretarial position, and Florence wasn't hired. She acknowledged that many people had more experience—and more recent experience—than she did.

In late December, shortly after reaching the "reëntry" phase of the Odyssey House program, she was overjoyed to be offered a job as a secretary at an office-supply company, at a salary of sixteen thousand dollars a year. January 2, 1990, was her first day of work. "It was exactly fourteen years since I'd been laid off from my last job and lost all those years to drugs," she says. "It felt great to be drug-free and working."

In the summer of 1989, Florence had met a handsome twenty-four-year-old man named Burton who was at FEGS studying major-appliance repair. Florence and Burton were friends for six months and then became lovers. Level IV's have the privilege of dating anyone who isn't in the program. She spoke in group therapy of marrying him. Her therapist at the time thought that this was one of Florence's fantasies. Crystal hoped that the therapist was right. Once, when Burton was supposed to meet Florence and Crystal at a subway station, he showed up two and a half hours late. That December, Burton invited Florence to spend Christmas with his mother. At the last minute, he said there had been a death in the family, and the plans were cancelled.

Many Odyssey House residents who are ready to graduate are unable to find housing, since affordable housing is in woefully short supply in the city. Graduates have been permitted to stay on a month or two past their projected departure dates, because Odyssey House does not discharge its graduates to the street. It encourages some residents to seek housing in New Jersey and other outlying areas or to pool their resources and live with two or three other graduates. Florence is a city person; for her Ward's Island was "like being out in the woods," and she has an aversion to the suburbs. The only person she fancied living with, Burton, had told her of an available apartment in Staten Island near the one he shared with his mother. He had proposed moving in with her, so she gave Odyssey House a departure date—March, 1990. The apartment fell through. She took a single room with a shared bath and no kitchen at 104th Street and Central Park West, and left Odyssey House in early May. She didn't go to her graduation ceremony on May 19th, and her diploma is still waiting to be picked up at Odyssey House's executive offices, on lower Broadway. Florence says she took the room in haste to get out of the program—she felt that it had nothing else to offer her. But she was also five months pregnant with Burton's child. Florence wasn't showing much ("I was so big anyway"), but she didn't want her favorite therapist at Odyssey House to know she was pregnant.

She did tell Crystal about her condition. Crystal was even more exasperated with Florence for being pregnant in 1990 than she had been when she learned of Michael's birth, four years earlier. "Now this lady supposed to be finally straightened out, but she still got six children in foster care spreaded all over the map and she expecting a seventh," she commented disapprovingly to one of her social workers. "Where her head was at and what that young punk be thinking of?"

THE original eighteen-month neglect petition, which was dated December, 1985, and stated that Florence had neglected Carlos, Matthew, Natasha, and James Drummond, had expired in June, 1987. It was then renewed twice, with Michael added to the petition. A C.W.A. worker asked Florence to sign her children into foster care voluntarily on June 2, 1989. Florence wasn't yet in a position to take her children out of foster care, but she was working toward that goal: she was doing well in her Odyssey House program and was visiting the children regularly. The purpose of having Florence accede voluntarily was to ease the way for her to get her children back.

The judges who serve on the Foster Care Review section of New York State's Family Court in New York City review cases for the city's five boroughs. On October 4, 1989, a 358A hearing—the initial review of a voluntary-placement agreement—was held in Family Court. A 358A hearing has several objectives, among them to certify that the voluntary-placement agreement was not signed under coercion, and to set a date for the next review of the case: the date set on October 4th was December 4th. At the 358A hearing, an organization called CASA—Court Appointed Special Advocates—was assigned to monitor the case of Florence and her five younger children; CASA accepts only cases in which children were placed voluntarily in care. A Foster Care Review judge may hear sixty or more cases each day. CASA's staff and volunteers assist an overwhelmed court to facilitate the exit of children from foster care by supplying judges with relevant information, and assist parents and children adrift in the child-welfare bureaucracy in the same way, with information that their overwhelmed caseworkers often do not have.

Deborah, the CASA volunteer assigned to Florence in October, 1989, got in touch with her at Odyssey House just as she started to search for a job. Two months later, when Florence had begun working, Deborah cited housing as the main obstacle preventing Florence from regaining custody of her children. In 1987, the caseworker who helped Florence apply to Odyssey House had also helped her apply to the New York City Housing Authority for public housing and for a Section 8 housing subsidy. (Section 8 is a federal program that provides low-income people with vouchers to pay part of the cost of private housing they could not otherwise afford.)

By early 1990, neither apartment nor vouchers had materialized, and Florence's caseworker was no longer with C.W.A. The agency had, however, created a new housing-subsidy program, to reunite parents with children in foster care when the foster-care worker determined that a lack of adequate housing was the primary factor preventing discharge. The maximum amount of assistance an eligible family could receive was three hundred dollars a month for as long as three years. Deborah called Florence's latest C.W.A. caseworker to have her apply for the subsidy for Florence, but the caseworker knew nothing about it and asked Deborah to send her the information.

In June, 1990, Deborah learned that Florence had been living since May in the room on Central Park West, for which she was paying six hundred and eighty dollars a month. She also learned, later that month, because Florence had initially confided in her C.W.A. caseworker, that Florence had been pregnant and had just lost the baby, at six and a half months. In July, Florence admitted to Deborah that she was in bad financial shape. She had been out for three weeks as a consequence of the miscarriage and had lost two weeks' pay, because new employees received only one week of sick leave.

Deborah went on vacation in August, 1990. She returned in September to discover that Florence had yet another C.W.A. caseworker and that nothing had been done to assist her in finding housing. When CASA (the New York City branch is one of four hundred CASA programs nationwide) is assigned a case and believes that the client needs counsel, it seeks legal help. Deborah had already called a lawyer in the civil division of Legal Aid to ask if Florence met the criteria for him to assist her. Another tenant in the building on Central Park West had told Florence that, at six hundred and eighty dollars a month, she was being overcharged for her room. The other tenant was paying less than a hundred and fifty dollars a month for a similar room. Legal Aid was limited in what it could do for Florence. Every child in foster care in New York State has a law guardian, and Legal Aid's juvenile division represents ninety-nine per cent of these children, including Florence's. To represent their mother would be a conflict of interest. Legal Aid suggested that Florence confront her landlord about her rent, and referred her to Morningside Heights Legal Services and Family Advocacy Clinic, a small program run by Columbia University Law School. In September of 1990, two second-year Columbia law students and a social-work student were assigned to

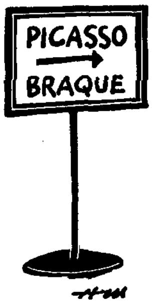
"There's a Mr. Egg McMuffin here who says we've been using his name without permission."

Florence to help her obtain financial assistance for an apartment.

On October 9th, fortified by this legal support, Florence confronted her landlord over her excessive rent and explained her need for a decent-sized apartment for herself and the children. She told him she had gone to a lawyer. The landlord said that he couldn't read her mind about requiring larger quarters and gave her twenty dollars for carfare to look at a newly rehabilitated four-room apartment in a building he owned in the Sunset Park section of Brooklyn. It rented for seven hundred dollars a month.

Florence took a one-year lease for the apartment to Morningside Heights Legal Services. The students knew that Florence was also eligible for a "one shot" public-assistance grant. They told her what documentation she would need, got her an emergency appointment at a public-assistance Income Maintenance Center, and spent a whole day sitting there with her. Without the grant, Florence, with no savings, could not have afforded the apartment. Within a couple of days, Florence received a check for a month's security deposit and her first month's rent.

C.W.A., having been educated by Deborah about its own three-hundred-dollar-per-month, up-to-three-years housing-subsidy program, put through a grant for Florence. Morningside Heights found an agency near her new apartment, the Center for Family Life, to supply continuing support services. Florence and her children would eventually go there for therapy.



Morningside Heights Legal Services also encouraged Florence to apply for Medicaid and food stamps (for which, because she had several children, she would be eligible despite her salary), and other subsidies, of which she had been unaware, including an allowance for furnishings and supplies required to establish a new household, which provided her with a few hundred dollars. Each child released from foster care was also entitled to a five-hundred-dollar discharge grant from C.W.A. for furniture and other items deemed necessary to make the child comfortable.

The Columbia students take on only two or three cases a year, so that they can devote sufficient time to each. Because Florence said she was determined to continue working full time, they helped her obtain services she would need once her children came home, including after-school care for James (a first grader) and Natasha (a third grader) and day care for four-year-old Michael. The five hundred dollars for each of Florence's children was disbursed by C.W.A. in a timely fashion. The agency had learned that with CASA advocating for a client, it would be taken to court for failure to fulfill its obligations. Florence moved into her new four-room apartment on October 20, 1990. All the subsidies paid out to her by C.W.A. and the other agencies involved were far less than the cost to the city of keeping her children in foster care—a minimum of twenty thousand dollars per child per year.

CARLOS had settled down quickly after his return to Children's Village from the Dunbars'. His social worker, his mother, and Deborah all expected him to be the first of the children to be "trial-discharged": children coming out of foster care are returned home provisionally, and if after three months they seem to have adjusted well they are given a final discharge. The social worker believed that Carlos was ready to return home in the fall of 1990, but, to her surprise, he told her he did not want to go. He chose instead to enter a group home that Children's Village had recently opened near Dobbs Ferry. His social worker believed that it would be destructive to attempt to discharge him to Florence against his will. Florence, who was taken completely off guard, was stunned and hurt, but had to accept his decision.

Natasha was anxious to be with her mother. It was decided that she would be the first discharged: one child had to be discharged within sixty days of the mother's receiving the C.W.A. rent subsidy; James and Michael would follow. Carlos and Matthew came down from Children's Village most weekends and holidays. When Florence yelled "Hammer time!" or "Work time!" they nailed down linoleum or put up curtains. Florence was chosen to receive a Children's Village Thanksgiving food basket, and cooked a hearty turkey dinner that included stuffing, greens, and sweet-potato pie. All the children were there for Christmas Day. Florence had saved up to buy nice presents. She bought a small plastic tree and decorated it with ornaments and tinsel.

ON December 5, 1990, sixteen days before Florence's younger daughter, Natasha Drummond, eight, went to live with her, Florence's older daughter, Crystal Taylor, twenty, was discharged from foster care by St. Christopher-Ottilie, the agency that had had her in foster care for almost six years. Crystal rented a basement apartment in Hollis, Queens, not far from where she had been living, for five hundred and twenty-five dollars a month. Crystal was peeved with Florence, who told her she was pregnant yet again, and with Burton, who was seldom around, "except to whisper sweet nothings in Mommy's ear." Florence later learned that she was not pregnant after all, but had an enlarged uterus.

Crystal's father called her on January 11, 1991, her twenty-first birthday. A few months earlier, Wesley Taylor had left the apartment in Harlem that he had shared with Barbara for ten years, because Barbara's income had plunged. The restaurant where she worked had been closed for selling drugs. She could no longer afford to keep Wesley high enough. He had moved into his mother's one-bedroom apartment in a project in the Williamsburg section of Brooklyn. Two of his brothers also lived there, with Felicia Taylor: her son Nelson, who was in a drug-rehabilitation program, and her son Lloyd, who was not. Lloyd or one of Wesley's other brothers supplied Wesley with drugs. He told Crystal to come by the apartment and he would give her some birthday money.

On Sunday, January 20th, Crystal rented a car and drove Carlos and Matthew (who were visiting from Children's Village), Natasha, and James (who had just been trial-discharged from foster care) to her grandmother's apartment. Wesley Taylor looked awful. "Old and drugged out" was the way Crystal saw him. She asked him for her birthday money and was disgusted when he told her he had spent it, and how: "I needed a hit." Crystal had always loved her grandmother but had had only contempt for Felicia's sons. "Ain't none of them was no role models for me to look up to," she said that night. "They was no doctors, lawyers, no sheriffs, no people to keep me out of foster care."

Two days later, Crystal received an upsetting piece of news. Her son, Daquan, had told his teacher that Mrs. Hargrove, his former foster mother, with whom he was staying, had hit him in the face with a stick. Crystal knew that Mrs. Hargrove might "chastise" Daquan but would never hit him. Mrs. Hargrove had all the foster children and adopted children she was certified to have and could not jeopardize her situation as a foster parent. She asked Crystal to please fetch little Daquan in three days. Crystal felt certain that her son's lie was his way of getting his parents to pay some attention to him. In late January of 1991, Daquan, six, went back to the Bronx to live with his father, his grandmother, and his teen-age cousins, the children of one of Daquan's brothers, who had used drugs and died of pneumonia.

Florence had also received upsetting news in January. Because of the recession, her employer had reduced her hours from thirty-five to twenty a week. That meant she would have to reapply for welfare to make ends meet.

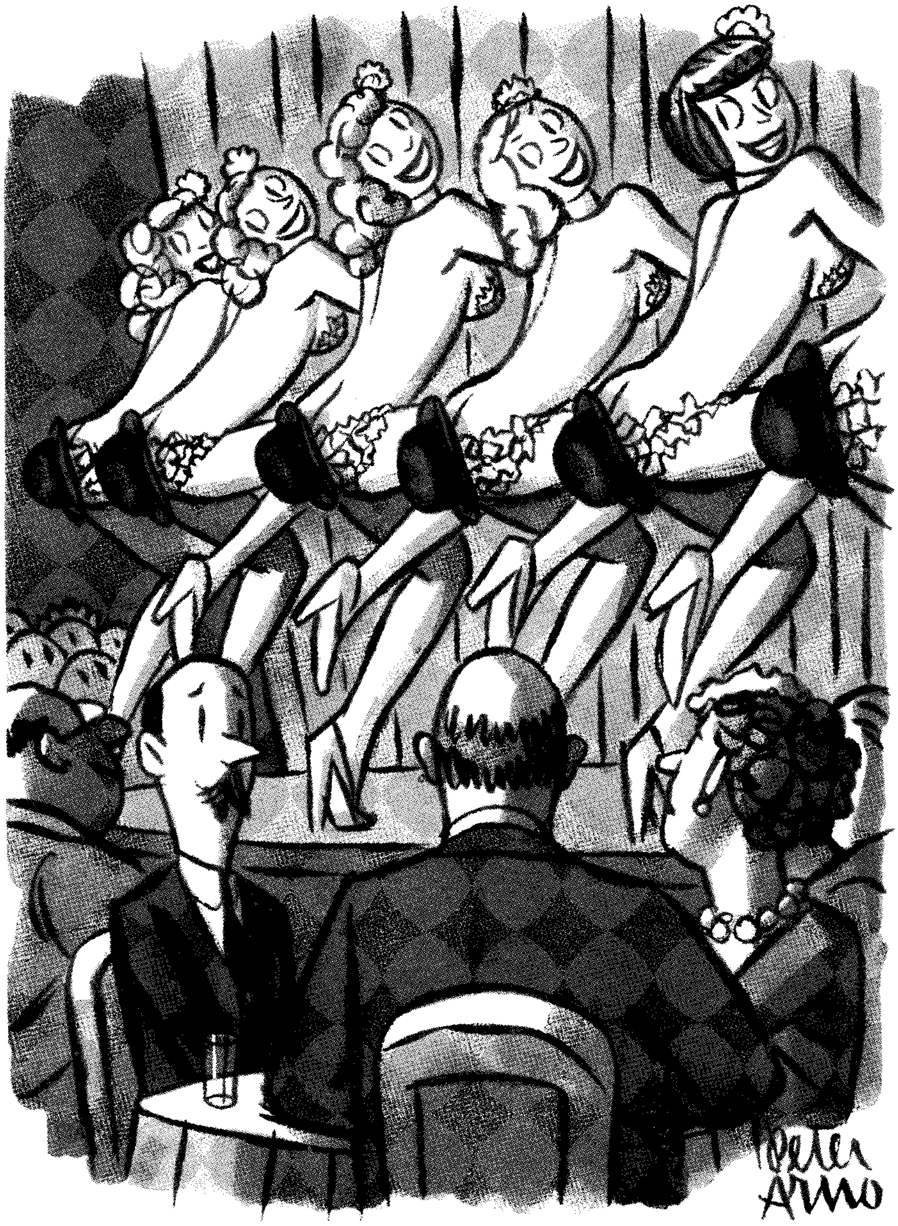
As Florence's children were being discharged from foster care, she made it clear that her idea of motherhood was similar to Crystal's: let the former foster parents keep the children as often as possible. For Easter Week in 1991, she sent Natasha to the Dunbars', and James to the home of Jacqueline and Lamont Charles. The Charleses had become James Drummond's foster parents in November, 1989, when Florence had him removed from the home of the woman who would not bring him to Brooklyn for visits.

The Charleses, a retired couple in their sixties, whose three children were grown, lived in a well-kept town house on a quiet street. Mrs. Charles became a foster parent in 1988. The Charleses had a thirteen-year-old grandson, Norman, who had been with them much of his life, and they decided that they would keep two boys as company for him. When James arrived, the Charleses had Melvin there and after Melvin left to return to his family they took in Timothy; James and Timothy especially liked playing in the Charleses' finished basement, which they called their apartment. Mrs. Charles enjoyed being a foster mother. "It's not something you do for money," she says. "Who would want to take care of a child seven days a week for a hundred dollars, which is what it comes to when C.W.A. gives you four or five hundred dollars a month?"

The foster boys called Mrs. Charles Grandma and Mr. Charles Grandpa, because their grandson did. "Sometimes you get so attached to them you do more for them than for your own," she says. "You're supposed to. I was working when my son and daughter grew up, so my mother-in-law took care of them. Therefore, I'm going to take good care of these children."

After James returned to Florence, the Charleses sent him "a little piece of money" for Valentine's Day and another little piece for his birthday. When Florence called to ask if James could stay with them for Easter Week, they agreed. Carlos took him partway to the Bronx by subway; the Charleses met him and

FORTY YEARS AGO IN THE NEW YORKER
BY PETER ARNO



"It isn't often one sees a bowler these days."

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took him the rest of the way. They were disappointed that Florence had sent him without an Easter basket and without a haircut. They bought him an Easter basket—"to make his Easter"—and had his hair cut: it had been cut every two or three weeks while he was with them.

Mrs. Charles found in James's notebook a list of things that he was supposed to ask the Charleses for. The list that Florence had given him read "I want a haircut, I need sneakers, I need a book bag, underwear, and clothes." When Mrs. Charles discovered the list, she had already bought James a book bag and "a two-piece underwear, because I wanted him to have that." She didn't buy him sneakers or any other clothes. The Charleses had subscribed to *Highlights* magazine for James, and at Easter they gave him the copies that had come since his January departure. Timothy cried when James left after Easter, so Mrs. Charles took in another foster child, Marlon. When Florence telephoned in June to ask if James could visit for a few weeks in the summer, Mrs. Charles told her that Timothy and Marlon had left and she had given up foster care. "You should have heard Florence in 1989 at the meetings with the people from C.W.A. and the court-appointed ones saying how bad she wanted the children," Mrs. Charles says. "I'm sure she's a good mother, but she still wants to have a good time. If she can get the children off her hands, that's fine, but I didn't like the way she went about it."

Michael came home after Easter. Sitting at the dinette table one Sunday afternoon eating peanut-butter-and-jelly sandwiches with his sister and brothers, he repeated to himself, "Mommy Florence Drummond, Mommy Florence Drummond." He appeared happy playing and watching TV with James and Natasha but told one of his older siblings that he didn't like Mommy and wanted to be with Ganny, which was what he had called Geraldine Kent for the four years he was with her.

At the suggestion of her sister-in-law, Mrs. Kent had become a foster mother in 1968, after Jeffrey, the second of her two children, had some serious asthma attacks when he was eight, which required her to take a leave of absence from her job in a pickle factory. (She had separated from her husband soon after Jeffrey's birth.) Mrs. Kent has had numerous foster children since. She adopted Thomas, the second child placed with her; he is now twenty-two years old and still lives with her. In 1982, she took in a baby boy, Otis, who is mildly retarded. When Otis was four and became eligible for adoption (his mother had disappeared), Mrs. Kent adopted him. Michael and Otis had been playmates since Michael came to Mrs. Kent's apartment—a two-bedroom one in a project—in early 1987, as a baby. Mrs. Kent's divorced daughter and her two children, who are twelve and eighteen, visit often. When Michael is with Florence, he recites the names of the children and young adults who make up his world at Mrs. Kent's.

"It was hard for me to let Michael go," Mrs. Kent said recently. "When he went home, I told him, 'Mike, you be a good boy,' and turned away, so he wouldn't see me crying.' I told Florence, 'You better not let anything happen to my baby.' "

As it turned out, Mrs. Kent did not have to let Michael go. He is the only one of Florence's children who has two homes. For the past year and a half, Geraldine Kent has kept him two or three weeks in summer and for a week or two over other school holidays. Mrs. Kent's welfare check covers her rent, which is low; her phone bill; and the gas and repairs for her 1980 car. Florence has never been to Mrs. Kent's apartment and has never offered to keep Otis, but Mrs. Kent doesn't mind. She is grateful to have Michael whenever he is able to come. He strikes her as a little more spoiled and a little readier to cry than when she had him, but if she asks him to do something and he refuses she threatens to send him home, and he says, "I'll be good." When it is time to leave Ganny, he asks "Why do I have to go home?" but, once home, he is soon playing with his older siblings.

On September 8, 1991, Crystal Taylor's boyfriend Tarrant, a thirty-nine-year-old man she valued only for his money—he owned a small grocery store in Queens—attempted to shoot her in the head. A bullet struck her upraised hand. At the hospital, her hand was operated on and put in a cast.

A couple of weeks before the shooting, Crystal happened to run into her uncle Nelson Taylor on the subway. He told her that her father was in the Veterans' Administration Hospital in Manhattan. Crystal, Carlos, and Nelson went to visit Wesley Taylor in late August. Wesley told Crystal that he had AIDS. It was his illness rather than his drug use that had made him appear so

A MOURNER

I put my head on my arms on my desk
to weep, and the smell and heat of my breath
remind me of afternoons at school
when the teacher made us stop our noise
and running around, and take a rest.

Not since then, except in love's
embrace, have the damp intensities
of my own body and feelings so
combined. My pain is this particular
odor, this primeval climate.

The teacher talked about an endless
age of fire and flood and earthquake,
everything changing, life-forms dying
and being born. In all the confusion
and turmoil, there should be a mourner.

—Ruth Fainlight

wan when Crystal saw him in January. Wesley Taylor died on Thursday, September 12th. It had been his custom to telephone Crystal every once in a while to "talk trap." One evening that summer, he had called her, had assumed or pretended to assume that she was with a man, and had said, "Tell that nigger to roll off you, this is your daddy." His parting words to her when she said goodbye to him at the V.A. Hospital were "Go on, little ho, and bust one for me."

Wesley Taylor's wake was held in a storefront funeral home in Harlem on the evening of Sunday, September 16, 1991. The open coffin was at the front of a plain room filled with chairs. Florence and the children filed past. Crystal was fashionably dressed in a black silk tank top, white culottes, a black plaid jacket, and a black-and-white hat, but she looked worn out from the combined trauma of the shooting and her father's death. Inside the cast, her hand throbbed with pain. Crystal burst out sobbing. "Daddy, Daddy, I never thought I'd see you like this," she wailed at the gaunt figure in the casket, a shadow of the nice-looking Don Juan she remembered from her childhood. "How could you leave me this way?" Matthew Drummond was quiet. Carlos confided to a male friend of the family who attended the wake that he felt sad he had never had a father. "Wesley kept saying he was going to come around and see us, and he never did," Carlos said, in an uncustomarily plaintive tone. There was a single basket of white flowers in the room, between the coffin and the visitors' book. It had a card that read "From your sons Howard and Roy."

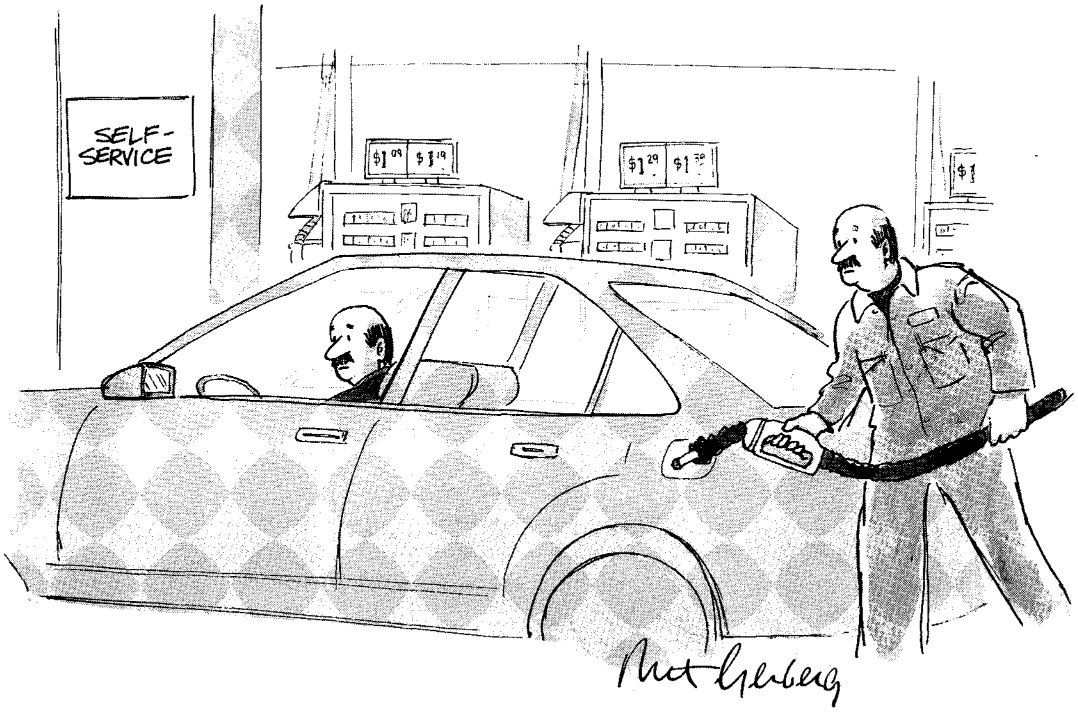
About fifty people attended the funeral, which was held the next morning in the same room. A second floral tribute, this one of red flowers, stood next to the first. Some neighbors of Wesley and Barbara's from 129th Street had taken up a collection to buy it. The person who sobbed the loudest was Barbara. She sat in the back, a homely woman who was much heavier than Florence.

That Christmas, Lavinia Wilson bought her grandchildren presents, and was surprised when Florence and Crystal gave her a hat and Cynthia a suit. As Florence had predicted, she would never be accepted by her mother. Florence continues to envy Cynthia, the favored daughter, who until not long ago was living, with a three-year-old son, in Lavinia's apartment in Astoria; she and her son now have an apartment of their own. Like her mother, Cynthia, who was nineteen when her child was born, was silenced by her church for one year for having a baby out of wedlock, but until recently she attended church every Sunday. Florence's brother Clifford turned to crack in the mid-eighties. He had no place to live, and moved in with Lavinia and Cynthia in 1987. He stayed there for three years. While he was with them, Lavinia beat Cynthia severely, and on more than one occasion Cynthia went to stay with Samuel Wilson and his family for a couple of months. When Florence first got out of Odyssey House, she asked Lavinia if she could visit her in Astoria; she has stopped asking. Lavinia initiates few phone calls and usually confines her travels to her part-time job at a discount store and to her church.

FOR six weeks after her father's death, Crystal lazed around Florence's apartment watching sitcoms, cartoons, and soaps and "conversating" on the phone. She appreciated the opportunity to be with Natasha, James, and Michael: "Now they knows that I am they big sister, Crystal." Since 1989, she had worked in the mailroom of an advertising agency on Madison Avenue. The agency was paying her disability insurance for three months. Tarrant drove Crystal to her doctor's appointments; her hand healed well, but the bullet left a bad scar. Tarrant told her he would take care of her rent and some other bills—the recession had cut into his income, he said—until she got back on her feet.

When Crystal went to her apartment to get her mail on October 25th, she discovered that it had been burglarized: her TV, her VCR, and a telephone that Tarrant had given her were missing. In early November, Tarrant drove Crystal's furniture and other possessions and her spring and summer clothes to a five-by-ten-foot storage room and paid six months of eighty-dollar-a-month storage charges. He had paid Crystal's September and October rent. Her month's security deposit covered the November rent.

The day after visiting the apartment, Crystal learned from an acquaintance that she could earn fifteen hundred dollars if she would marry an illegal alien, convince the Immigration and Naturalization Service that it was a bona-fide marriage, and stay married to him until his visa was stamped in a way that per-

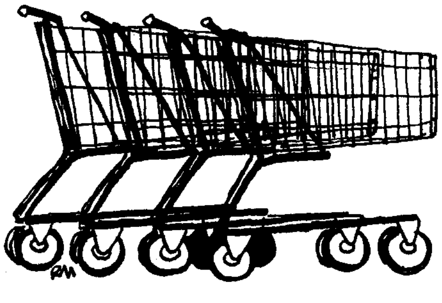


mitted him to leave the country and return. Crystal needed the money to pay off clothes bills and rental-car charges she had put on her credit card. She was to marry a Moroccan in his late thirties, and Florence, who was also in financial straits, would marry a Nigerian in his early twenties. Crystal met the Nigerian and liked his looks. "You be getting this fly husband and I be getting another senior citizen," she observed to Florence. Ultimately, it was Crystal who married the Nigerian—and had a brief romance with him—and Florence the Moroccan. Crystal was paid in full for her marriage. Florence received only five hundred dollars' advance money; the marriage broker absconded with the remaining thousand dollars.

Florence's financial problems had begun after she applied for welfare. At first, she received $313.20 a month and food stamps worth $271. Then the computer at the public-assistance office turned up the fact that Florence still owed money on her earlier welfare fraud: serving the week in jail in 1977 hadn't wiped out the debt. The office was also under the mistaken impression that all Florence's children were still in foster care. As the months went by, her welfare checks got smaller. By summer, she was receiving $72.60 a month and food stamps worth $401. The food stamps didn't pay the rent, and she couldn't pay it with her part-time salary and the small welfare checks, either. (She did take advantage of supermarket specials, and stockpiled groceries.) By the end of the year, Florence owed her landlord twelve hundred dollars—her share of three months' rent. The landlord obliged her by filing a dispossess—a document that states the amount of rent the tenant owes and threatens the tenant with paying up, appearing in court, or moving out. Florence and her landlord knew that when she went to court the rent would be paid, because the city has a mandate to prevent eviction if children are endangered.

Pamela, Florence's social worker at the Center for Family Life in Sunset Park, which a number of child-welfare professionals consider one of the best preventive-services agencies in the city, was trying to help Florence straighten out her finances. Florence, Natasha, James, and Michael met with Pamela at the center every Monday evening, and Florence was persuaded to join a single-parent group session on Thursday evenings. One evening when Florence arrived at the center, Pamela told her that she had been flabbergasted to learn from the director of the local public-assistance office that Florence was married. The director had told Pamela that her client had a nerve asking public assistance to pay her rent when she was swindling the taxpayers by getting rich from a foreigner. Pamela asked Florence why she hadn't told her about the marriage. For once, Florence came right out and admitted what she had done, and why. She told Pamela that she had received only five hundred dollars, and had spent a lot of that to buy the children clothes. Pamela persuaded the director to pay the back rent and to close Florence's welfare-fraud case. Florence's latest experience with welfare convinced her that she would be better off working full time, and when full-time jobs again became available at her company, in February, 1992, she accepted one. By then, Florence didn't have to worry about rushing home to pick up her children from after-school care at six o'clock. Matthew Drummond, fifteen, had been released from Children's Village just before Christmas, 1991. He had been caught stealing from other boys in Dobbs Ferry after his return there from the Dunbars', in September, 1990, and from Florence when he came home on weekend visits early in the year, but then the stealing had stopped. He was happy to come home and also attended the Monday-evening therapy sessions—a requirement during his three-month trial-discharge period—although he was even more guarded than his mother.

FLORENCE has been depressed in recent weeks. In order to be eligible for food stamps and other benefits—and because she still hopes to marry Burton—she paid five hundred and seventy-five dollars to get a divorce from the Moroccan. Sixteen-year-old Carlos had appeared to be doing well at the Children's Village group home near Dobbs Ferry until December of 1991, when he started to bully the younger boys and to provoke fights, threatened to damage a staff member's sports car, and punched holes in walls. In the opinion of his social worker, part of his behavior was attributable to his father's death. He was sent back to Children's Village for a while, and, then, in the summer of 1992, was transferred to a Children's Village group home in Flushing. He is smoking reefer, sleeping with girls (he says he uses condoms, because "I don't want to be no one's father"), and cutting some classes. He goes to Florence's apartment fairly often on weekends, but his discharge goal is "independent living." He recently visited the Dunbars. "I won't go home unless I foul up and have nowhere else to go," he said to Mrs. Dunbar. "There's something about my mother that isn't quite right."



As Carlos seemed to adjust to Flushing, Matthew began to behave in ways that were unacceptable to Florence. When he was supposed to pick up the younger children after school, he showed up late or not at all. He was defiant. Florence found the windows of her apartment open and large amounts of bread, juice, and eggs missing from her refrigerator. The younger children found a bottle of beer under his bed. Florence suspected that Matthew was not going to school and was hanging out with a friend at home; she learned that he had played hooky for two weeks. Florence called a social worker at Children's Village and said she couldn't handle him. Elaborate arrangements were made for him to return to Dobbs Ferry in late October for a month or two, but he was kept there for only a day. When Florence's children exasperate her, she threatens to send them back to their foster parents. "Mommy, you shouldn't be saying that," Crystal tells her.

CRYSTAL did face up to the necessity of bringing her son to live with her. In the Bronx, no one walked him to school or had any time for him. Little

"Well, Pook, here's to one old marriage that just won't go away."

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Daquan had misbehaved in his second-grade class. He had rolled around on the floor, quacking like a duck, and hadn't done his schoolwork. When Crystal tried to discipline him, over the phone, he had said "Mommy's only blowing off hot air." When he used words like "butt," she thought of the Hargroves and of how children didn't use rude words in Mrs. Hargrove's house. Crystal went apartment hunting and, last spring, found a one-bedroom place four blocks from Florence's apartment for five hundred and eighty dollars a month. In September, Crystal changed her work hours: instead of six-thirty to two-thirty, her schedule was nine to five. Daquan goes to school with Florence's children and is in after-school care until Crystal gets home. He had been left back in the Bronx, and after moving in with his mother he began to repeat second grade in Brooklyn. He spends a lot of time with Florence's children, frequently sleeping over at his grandmother's apartment. Crystal often finds herself telling him, "Daquan, I ain't your friend, I is your mother," but she is glad to have him home. "I only beat him on his behind or his hands," she says. "I don't hit my baby on his face." Little Daquan (Crystal has had his birth certificate changed so that he is now Daquan Jefferson instead of Daquan Drummond) seems at ease with Crystal's beaux, who sometimes sleep over, and he visits the Bronx with her regularly. She often teases big Daquan, who is still attracted to her and keeps in his closet some of the clothes she wore when they met. "They his memories," Crystal says. A combination of her teasing and her need for money recently conspired to make her decide to go to bed with him, but at the last minute she backed out, and later told a few friends that she wouldn't "do the nasty for twenty-five dollars." Crystal warns little Daquan about taking up with women like her. She has modest expectations for him. "If he brings me a high-school diploma, I be satisfied," she says. "The one thing I know is he ain't going back to foster care."

THE achievements and the failures of the foster-care system are as varied as the children, parents, and foster parents it comprises. While no one can say what would have become of Florence without foster care, Florence's memories are bitter, and she still hates her mother for, as she sees it, giving her away. She has borne a grudge her entire life. Because she knows the suffering that many foster children endure, she feels guilty that she did not have the resources or the strength to spare her children the same fate. Yet it was the pain of foster care and the desire to reclaim her children which helped give her the will to overcome her drug addiction. Crystal, who went into foster care after having a child at fourteen, has said that without it she would have become pregnant again and would probably have ended up on welfare. The effects of foster care on any child are as unpredictable as its effects were on Florence and Crystal. The simple remedy one hears proposed most often is that the money spent on foster care—whose wards in New York City have nearly tripled in the past ten years—would be better spent trying to solve its root causes: poverty, drug addiction, and homelessness. Yet experience has shown that these social problems are amenable only to slow, expensive, and hard-thought-out measures. In the meantime, something has to be done to take care of the children.

Pamela, the social worker at the Center for Family Life, left for another job in September, 1992. She had worked with Florence and her children for a year and a half, but she had been unable to budge Florence on the issue of corporal punishment, which Pamela opposed. Florence said she was going to continue to hit her children, and she did. They all know their punishment corners. And yet Pamela, who knew Florence's faults, thought she also knew her strengths. "I think that she has potential and that the kids may do all right," she said last week. "Despite all the history of foster care, they really are a family." ♦

(*This is the second part of a two-part article.*)

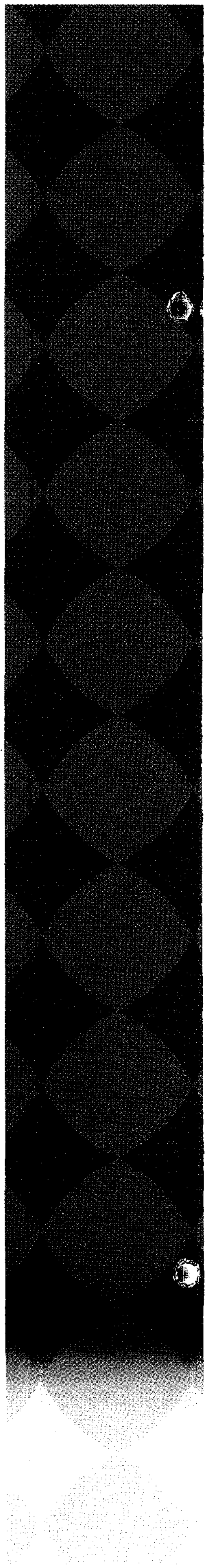
POSTSCRIPT

RUDOLF NUREYEV

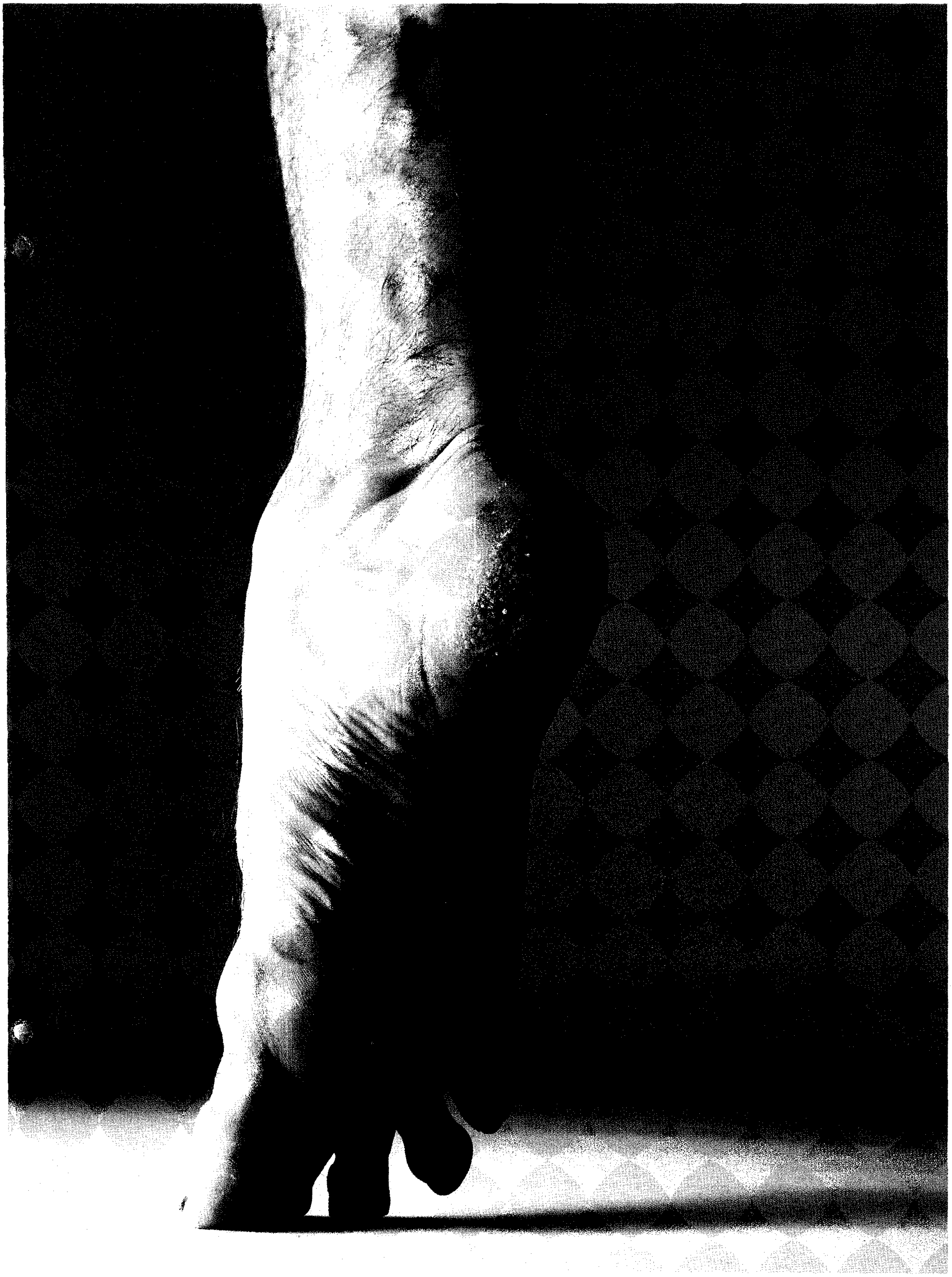
BY ARLENE CROCE

Rudolf Nureyev was more than a star; he was a *monstre sacré*, one of the very few examples of the breed to arrive on the world's stage after the middle of the twentieth century. And what an arrival it was. Romanticism had long since folded its purple tent; the muslin and the moonlight had faded from view; but when Nureyev blazed onto the scene in his headband and harem trousers the old ghosts woke in the rafters, the cats on the catwalk peered down at him with shining eyes, and Scheherazade started a whole new story. He was a very young master (twenty-three at the time of his defection) of a very old style, and everyone said he would have to change. He never did. The fact that classical ballet had become thoroughly metamorphosed into a twentieth-century art form before he was born did not bother him. He was a nineteenth-century man. But in the nineteen-sixties ballet was undergoing another kind of change, from minority cult to middle-class pastime. Nureyev, with his anachronistic charm, presided over this momentous transformation; some would say he even incited it. The sixties had a term of approbation all ready for the spectacle that was Rudolf Nureyev: "far out." All the "out" words seemed to fit him: "outlandish," "outsider," "outlaw," "outcast." He connected with the rebellious, hyperbolic spirit of the times, and suddenly ballet was in.

Never the greatest of dancers, he was one of the most alluring personalities the art has ever known and the only political symbol it has ever produced. It is good that he lived to see the Soviet Union crumble, for he was Mikhail Gorbachev's advance man as well as Mikhail Baryshnikov's. But it is as a dancer that he would wish to be remembered. If one had to name Nureyev's most outstanding quality, it would be his pride in—and near-fetishistic devotion to—ballet as the regulated expression of a physical passion. He loved technical nitty-gritty; some of his performances were stuffed with it. This could be maddening, but this was Nureyev. Far from confining him, tech-



PHOTOGRAPHS BY RICHARD AVEDON



nique really was the thing that opened Nureyev up; it seemed to release more energy, more fuel for performance. Searingly vivid in memory are his fifth position and the first time we saw it: in the "Don Quixote" pas de deux on a breathless evening at the Brooklyn Academy in 1962, a whole year before Hurok began presenting him with the Royal Ballet. Male classical dancers in those days were not nearly as turned out as they are now, and it was Nureyev who made the difference, but when he first appeared with his feet placed at nine-fifteen he seemed altogether absurd. And he was absolutely adamant about it. The truly remarkable feature of that signature step of his—the "double assemblé"—was the tight fifth he held from takeoff to landing. It was the double revolution in the air that caught the eye, and at first everyone who tried the step stumbled coming down, as Nureyev himself sometimes did. Then his imitators caught on, and the step today is a commonplace, along with full turnout. Nureyev would go into his perfect fifth even when he had nothing to do but support his partner. He would draw himself up, his feet locked, his head high, and only then would he offer his hand proudly to his ballerina, as much as to say, "Let's make this one legit."

Sacred monsters make their own rules, but Nureyev lived by the rules of academic dancing. His famous effortfulness in performance was not an attempt to revolutionize style; it was a testament to his belief in a self-sanctifying struggle. Blake's "Damn braces, bless relaxes" would have been meaningless to him. Through his most perilous years of decline, he kept the faith, refusing to cut corners or settle for cheap effects, even when it would have made his audiences breathe easier. And even when he sought out other techniques, as when he danced with the companies of Martha Graham and Paul Taylor, he was plainly not on holiday; he was merely exchanging one hair shirt for another. No doubt he should have retired long ago, but every other medium he tried—and he tried them all: choreography, acting, musical comedy, and, most recently, conducting—failed to engage more of Nureyev than his legendary Luciferian will. He returned over and over to the ballet stage. When he died last week, at fifty-four, he had been out of harness less than a year. His passing makes a sadly diminished dance scene seem all the bleaker. ♦

Rudolf Nureyev, July 25, 1961, New York City.

FICTION

THE VOYAGE OUT

BY JOHN ROLFE GARDINER

TONY HOSKINS, at twelve, was an intellectual child, wary of sensation. Not a prodigy exactly, but at the head of his form at Cacketts School. He could declaim on several tales from Chaucer, and on the paths of the planets, even on the curious journeys of human sperm and ovum, although he hadn't a clue about finding a girlfriend or about what might be asked of him in pleasing one.

On this day he was saying all the wrong things. First to his father: "Daddy, at least I'll be sailing on a British ship, under a British flag."

"Actually not," he was told. "It's an American vessel. You'll be all right."

This was before the German began to aim his torpedoes at Yanks, before his subs began to hunt in wolfpacks.

"Not to worry," his father went on. "You'll be in convoy."

Why a convoy if no need to worry? His father, in Royal Army lieutenant's uniform, bare of medals, could not answer.

Hoping to put his religion in order before embarkation, Tony looked to his mother. "Tell me again, what's the Trinity?" he said unexpectedly just before the ship pulled out.

"Tiresome boy," she said. "Three in one and one in three. If you don't understand that, you shan't have a chocolate."

Again he was confused; his mother's simplistic formulation seemed at odds with her piety. Hardly off the gangplank, his legs rubbery with fear, he didn't want candy, only assurance that this huge and blunt-prowed merchant ship with a woman's name, the Ellen Reilly, riding high in the water, would come to safe port across the Atlantic and that his new school would be tolerable.

He saw other parents retreating, crying into handkerchiefs, stumbling off the boat and along the dock, giving their boys up to the sea and a new world. The drawn lips of his father and mother began to quaver as they turned away. And enemies appeared beside him, his second-form mates Booth and Jeffries, full of questions:

"Do the lifeboats have engines?"

"Is it daytime in Canada?"

"Will we take a secret course to avoid submarines?"

The same boys who despised him in the classroom, who had called him "twit" and "wonkie" for his privileged conversations with the masters, were hovering around him. Why should he nurse their fears?

And here came Rasson-Pier, who was older, a fifth former who had once caned Tony for impudence. Rasson-Pier told them all to shut up. He said the lot of them should be ashamed for leaving their country in wartime. And if it were up to him he'd be in uniform, not in retreat.

"Hoskins, you're in my cabin," he announced. "See that the beds are made taut."

Rasson-Pier, tall, well muscled, and lording it over the others from Cacketts, with gray eyes under blond bangs, and sufficient beard to be permitted a razor in his kit.

Riding down the channel from Folkstone, Tony tried to use his father's advice: "Think of the ship as the floating island of a country still at peace." Over on their left was France, which he knew to be alive with Germans; on the right, his own island, which, after dark, would be under attack again from the air.

Only three weeks earlier, Tony's headmaster, strolling across his playing fields at night, had been killed by a bomb far off its city target. A miraculous and devastating event, a direct hit on school morale. In the ensuing rearrangements of the school year, Tony and six other boys, and Mr. Pardue, history master of the stunned academy, had been booked on this empty supply ship—refugees for resettlement in a Canadian boarding school.

The Ellen Reilly came clear of the coast and swung to the west. There was no convoy, only open sea. Tony took the blank journal his father had given him that morning (with the advice of writing five hundred words a day at bedtime) and threw it over the side.

"You mustn't be angry," Pardue admonished. "It will only be fourteen days." But Tony gestured at the zigzag wake of the ship, the pattern of fear they were leaving on the sea behind them.

"Never mind," Pardue told him, "you'll be at their organ in two weeks. Maybe some of your Chopin, eh?"

"Maybe some of his Chopin, eh?" The other boys played with the line, but anxiety cracked their voices.

IN the boys' new school, an oddity of brick and stone nestled in farm fields to the west of Toronto, they came to be known as "The Boys from Cacketts," or "The Boys from Cacketts Minus One," after the tragedy at sea, while their teacher shepherd became "Pastor Pardue" among his new colleagues, who found him to be a total loss as an instructor, and a fount of useless homily: "There are no ifs in history."

They were set apart as a curious subculture among the relatively coarse population of Canadian boys—a little band with a higher order of fealty to the King, and led in intellect by the youngest, the pale scholar Tony. He was allowed into the school chapel each afternoon to practice at the organ, while the others were led off to a field to fight over a leather ball or flail away with cricket bats. Tony had come with two copies of his medical excuse, proof of his asthma—one to be filed in the school infirmary, and the other for his pocket. Thus reprieved from athletic torment, he was free to demonstrate his case that the body's only sensible purpose is to carry around the brain.

ON October 28, 1941, Lieutenant Gerald Hoskins dashed off a note, from his office in the London Cage, to his son, Tony, at the Charter Bridge School:

Dearest Tony,

Horrible, horrible. We had the awful news before your letter arrived. There are not enough tears in the world to answer for the loss of a child. And such a well-favored boy by all reports. You must be numb. Our only response to such an untimely death can be surpassing love for those who survive. Try to think of our love for you.

You say the Trinity was revealed to you on the crossing. Very well, but remember you are stuck to the planet by gravity, and from an Oriental perspective you may be upside-down, worshipping the devil. But no more—the Colonel is calling.

P.S. No, we don't keep animals here. Nor are there Nazis in dank cells. "London Cage" is simply the informal name given to this interrogation center. From time to time I will write you from my office here, where I won't have your mother looking over my shoulder. The address here must remain unknown to you. Your letters should be posted home.

A SECOND letter from the Lieutenant to his son, dated November 15, 1941:

Dearest Tony,

Nothing from you this month. Our assumption must be that you have settled in and found a schedule suited to your special needs. We have a report from Dean Hastie, who tells us your academic proficiency is "not balanced by contribution to community."

While offering the excuse of your harrowing journey, he cites you for sarcastic remarks about the Canadian students, for shirking work in the school garden, and resisting dress regulations.

Though your mother and I agree that shorts are not suited to the climate, the answer is to bundle heavily on top. Wear the sweater, scarf, and cap as prescribed in the school manual. You know that long trousers come in the third form, just as they do at Cacketts.

You may have heard on the wireless that we are managing quite well in the air. When I am not translating or writing interrogation reports, they have me reading prisoners' mail. There, I've told you a little secret, and you must keep it to yourself.

A sympathy committee has been got up here. We take turns visiting the Rasson-Piers. When you have a moment you will write them whatever you can muster of David's last days. Perhaps something you found heroic in him, or you could express your wonder at his potential. As the last to see him you are a target of their curiosity. They have questions beyond the police type, which they are too discreet or grief-bound to ask. It will be your job, now or later, to anticipate and console.

It's too awful to think he might have been showing off acrobatically so close to the side. Showing off for whom? one asks, since no one saw him go overboard. So dreadful for all of you, wondering if he were hiding somewhere or actually lost at sea.

We hope the investigation has ended and we pray for your happiness. Or, I should say, your mother prays and I beg of fate. Have you been faithful to your journal? It will be a revelation to you in time to come.

AFTER the blank journal had gone over the side, Mr. Pardue had gone to his cabin to fetch a substitute, another bound notebook with marbled cover.

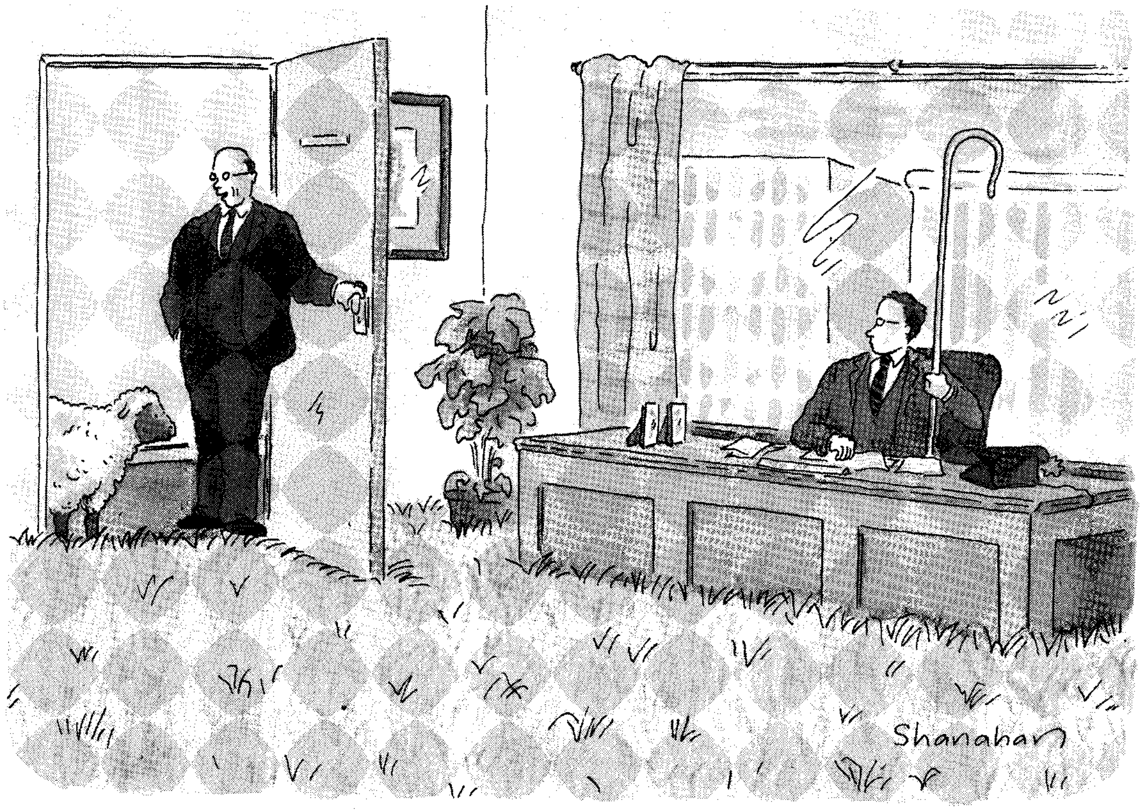
"Your father told me how much this means to him," he said to Tony. "I've put in some starter lines in for you." He pointed to the first page:

For every trouble under the sun,
There be a remedy or there be none.
If there be one, try and find it,
If there be none, never mind it.

"You take it from there," he said, smiling.

Before they left the channel someone had puked. And now the boys' stomachs felt the rise, fall, and side shift of the Atlantic's heavy quartering waters. The first officer promised only more discomfort. "That's right—we're empty," he announced on the boat deck. "And the higher she rides, the further she rolls."

He had come from the bridge to lay down ship's rules for the Cacketts boys. At mealtime they would go to the mess deck, officers' side. The rest of the day they would remain in their cabins doing schoolwork. For exercise, they could walk the main deck, but only with Mr. Pardue's supervision. The bridge and hold of the ship were off-limits. The boys must stay out of the crew's cabins



"You'll be working with Simmons."

and out of the galley, or risk losing a hand to the steward's cleaver.

The officer had no sooner turned back when Rasson-Pier performed the first of his handstands on the ship's railing. Upside-down, he had winked at Tony as the ship rocked in a rising swell.

"See that, Hoskins?" The older boy's hand was on Tony's shoulder as they went to their cabin. "You can count on me, you see. I'll be watching out for you. You have nothing to fear from the chaps in Canada."

Dean Hastie at the Charter Bridge School to the parents of Tony Hoskins in Brasted, Kent, November 30, 1942:

We normally write to parents of the boys from Cacketts at the end of each term. However, the head and I felt it would be wrong to delay in reporting that Tony is in a fair way to surpassing school records for third-form boys in Mathematics, Latin, and History of the Empire. He might achieve similar distinction in Composition if he could be kept to assigned topics.

We should recommend your son for immediate advancement to fourth form if his social and emotional maturity were up to the same marks. As you know, at Charter Bridge we strive to develop the fully rounded boy. We had expected that in his second year here Tony would have put new-boy diffidence behind him and joined with a will in some extracurricular pursuit.

Perhaps Tony has mentioned the motto cut in stone over our chapel door. "Remember Now Thy Creator in the Days of Thy Youth." We take the charge seriously, so you must not misunderstand when I say the religious conversion your son experienced on his journey here is troubling in its intensity. Our chaplain cannot shake him from his testimony that the Trinity was revealed to him on the ocean as three glowing balls. We see no joy in his faith.

I must tell you that the transfer has not been a complete success. The boys from Cacketts tend to remain a clique, though they sometimes quarrel among themselves. Your son does not seem to be a member, even of this separate band. We sense a residual grieving here for the loss of their young idol, and a weight of unfinished business. One boy has suggested that Tony's original account of the events at sea may not be reliable. And now, more than a year after the fact, our Mr. Pardue comes forward to say that your son may have kept a journal which might clear him of all suspicion. We wouldn't think of invading his privacy without warrant. Perhaps you would advise him to open relevant pages to our scrutiny.

A brighter note. Our music instructor is leaving Charter Bridge this month, and we are asking Tony to fill in as chapel organist for Sunday service and Wednesday vespers. It's our little scheme to get him more involved.

On the journal's first page Pardue's verse has been scribbled over and splashed with ink:

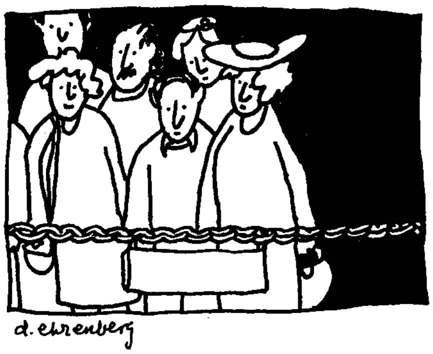
Sept. 23, 1941. Aboard the Ellen Reilly: The ship is black, red, and rusty. Sailed 1420 Greenwich. R.-P.'s stunt behind Pardue's back takes everyone's breath. Supper: mashed potatoes, bright-yellow gravy of uncommon viscosity, and salty fish, white and cooked to a mush like the potatoes. One serving of greens a day; we missed them by coming aboard too late for lunch.

Tonight Jeffries came into our cabin crying. He wanted to know why I was put with R.-P. R.-P. said wouldn't the Germans love to see him like that. Jeffries left snivelling. R.-P. asked me down from my upper to play cards on his bunk. Twenty-one. No money, playing for favors, he said. I lost terribly, what do I owe him? R.-P. has torch with extra dry cells. He will allow me to use it to keep my notes. Says he's at sea in Latin. Quite so! And I, a second former, might help.

Booth came in shaking with fear. The idiot thinks he heard a torpedo propeller passing under us. No one can sleep.

A year after the crossing, the notebook was more useful to Tony as a chronology of odd particulars than as a thoroughgoing journal—a skeleton on which his memory hung the dangerous flesh, the things he would never have written down. For example, the way Rasson-Pier's tone had changed after lights-out from cold command to simpering—as if he were taking the part of a woman in a play.

With the notion of water rushing in to drown him in his sleep, Tony had sneaked out of his cabin in the middle of the first night and wandered through dim-lit passages, down metal stairways, into empty cargo compartments. Somewhere close to the throbbing center of the ship he heard a horse whinny and a lion roar. Alarmed by what he took to be his own inventions, he became confused in retreat, and spent an unconscionable time finding his cabin again.



From Lieutenant Gerald Hoskins at the London Cage to Tony Hoskins at the Charter Bridge School, April 13, 1943:

Yes, we support your refusal to show any part of the journal. Violation of your private thoughts is tantamount to rape of the spirit.

There is mischief here, too. I'm sorry to say we are no longer speaking with the Rasson-Piers since they find more comfort in the gossip of the Jeffrieses, passed along by their son Arthur. A poisonous little chap, I'd guess, but you would know better than I.

Yes, traits in an individual can be correlated with national origin, the pieties of Mr. Pardue to the contrary notwithstanding. It's quite possible that the impulsive and vainglorious side of David Rasson-Pier was passed along by the father's French parents. As to the question of cultural distinction, consider the opening lines of two letters which crossed my desk this week, the first from a German: "Dear Mother, The most awful thing has happened. We have been captured by the English and are being held in Oran, waiting transfer to a prison camp in America."

The second from an Italian: "Dear Mama, The most wonderful thing has happened. We have been captured by the English and will soon be on our way to the United States."

Don't mistake me, I'm not advocating one attitude over the other. But if your Pardue doubts the relevance of my example, I suggest he visit the prison camp in Bowmanville. I'm told the Germans there are goose-stepped by their officers to the mess hall, where Italians happily prepare the food and banter about the women waiting for them in the town.

No, we do not hold it against the Dean for denying you further use of the chapel organ. Really! A two-octave glissando at the end of "God Save the King" while the school waited for amen! Did you expect to get away with that?

Guard your journal.

"The most important thing is to believe in yourself."

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September 25, 1941, aboard the Ellen Reilly:

This whole ship trembles with the thump of its engines. Diesels, I'm told. Above this constant drumming is the daylong rattle of electric paint chippers as the crew works at their endless chore of scraping and painting. They'll go from bow to stern, then start all over again.

No one actually studied today. In spite of the din, fell asleep over my books. R.-P. woke me before Pardue came in. Anyone caught napping during study time gets twenty-four-hour cabin confinement. I've been made tutor of second and third formers. Pardue says those not prone to seasickness must minister to those who are. He is. So is Jeffries. I am not.

Booth apologized for rudeness. As R.-P. has taken my part, others are shifting colors, too, seeking my favor. At present, most of them are unable to function. While they moan in their bunks, I explore.

Dolphins weaving under the prow. Watched them for most of an hour before slipping below again. One of the crew stopped me. Only wanted to talk. This was Sam, an able-bodied seaman, who is missing two fingers, and limps. Asked did I know there were unfortunates below. Heard animals again in lower cargo compartments. Couldn't find them.

Night walk. The deck was dark but for moonlight. No outside lights permitted. Passageways only faintly lit. Memorized numbers on doors and did not get lost. No one believes I saw a black-haired girl in bathing costume. She was rattling a cup of coins and chanting something sad, as if practicing to be a beggar. Someone called from another compartment, "*Raklo! Raklo!*" and she stood still as a stone. If R.-P. doesn't believe any of this, why does he keep asking how old the girl was and what she looked like? Very young. Her skin a mottled ochre.

Someone filched my breakfast orange. R.-P. boxed Booth's ear. Doesn't matter who did it, he says, just doesn't want it happening again.

Tony had put aside pen and notebook when Rasson-Pier offered his soft invitation.

"Do you want to come down to my bunk?" All the courage and bluster vanishing again.

"No."

"For a little visit?"

"No."

"You're to be kind to those who aren't feeling well."

He didn't believe the older boy was sick, only dodging the books for another day, with the sympathy of Pardue.

"No."

From Dean Hastie at the Charter Bridge School to the parents of Tony Hoskins in Brasted, Kent, May 21, 1943:

Looking toward vacation, we are suggesting that Tony not remain in dormitory with Mr. Pardue and the other boys from Cacketts. We would not want a repeat of last summer's incident. With your permission, Tony will spend the interim at the Croyston farm, which provides the school with milk and eggs.

A picture of the family is enclosed. In truth, I think the Croystons would welcome an appropriately innocent companion for their shy daughter, Margaret, and your son seems well suited for the job. Though the family won't provide intellectual stimulation, they keep a wholesome life, devout yet not without humor.

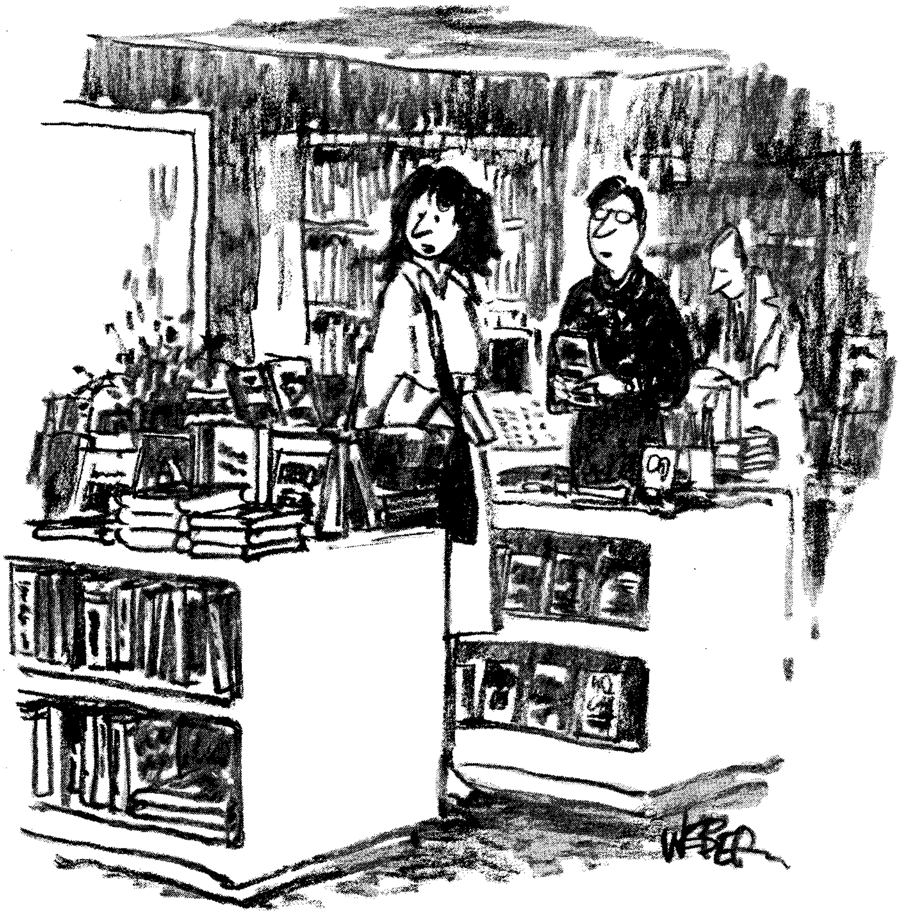
Tony will be expected to help with farm chores, perhaps just the thing for the continuing melancholy. A break from the high academic standard to which he holds himself, and from his difficult religion. May I quote him? "The faith at Charter Bridge is to true faith as water is to wine." Perhaps the justification for his little musical joke on the school.

We have not discounted homesickness—the long, unnatural separation from the two of you. Too, the Rasson-Pier case will not go away. As I explained months ago, the initial investigation produced little but tears and mystery. Should we discourage the family from persisting? So many loose ends. From their distance can they be sure the appropriate questions were asked? Our Cacketts boys have kept the stew at a boil.

You ask again for the facts free of the children's fantasy. The ship's log reported the child missing on October 1, 1941. Captain Andrew Shad made inquiries and established that David had been given to reckless displays of daring. He concluded one of these must have been the boy's final act.

The Ellen Reilly made its first port, Halifax, on October 7. Our boys disembarked and were detained there two days for questioning, first by the R.C.M.P., later by a visiting magistrate from London. Before the investigation was completed and the Captain's finding upheld, the ship had already taken on grain and tinned food, and sailed the night of October 8 for Baltimore. There the loading of war supplies was completed. With the same officers and crew the boat turned back for England on October 14.

We now believe there was another element on board the Ellen Reilly between England and North America, a group kept apart from legitimate ship's company but sighted several times if we are to believe the Jeffries boy and your own child. A band of Polish performers? Gypsies? Lithuanian Jews? How they came to be on the ship and where they disembarked are as open to speculation as their nationality.



"Do you have any of those books that understand men?"

We had, too, the crass report of a seaman named Sam, put off the boat in Halifax for the theft of a pair of shoes. He was a rough sort who befriended several of our boys and entertained them with bawdy talk in his quarters, which they knew were off-limits.

This Sam testified to having seen passengers in the hold. He fouled his account with details of a dark young lady, little more than a child by his word, offering her favors to several of the crew. If people didn't believe him, he said, they could ask our boys what she'd do.

As to the mysterious travellers, whether Captain Shad gave them passage as a humanitarian gesture or for his own profit is unclear. Their arrival was not recorded by Canadian immigration. Shad, who survives as a master in the merchant marine (the Ellen Reilly went down in January, off the Azores), does not deny that such a group could have been stowaways during his command.

We are told that the docks in Halifax are too closely patrolled for any such band to have disembarked without papers. They may never have come ashore in North America unless they were spirited off the ship in Baltimore. The United States was not yet at war, and security was doubtless lax. This seems a remote possibility but so does their very existence on board. Given the curious tatterdemalion migrations and urgencies of wartime, their passage is not beyond belief. Perhaps sympathy, reinforced by coin, eased the path into America.

Again we ask you to urge your child to come forward with his journal, if it exists, and any relevant information that might soothe the family. We have again advised the Rasson-Piers against a crossing.

Though we find Tony a difficult boy, the faculty is interested by him, and, if I may say so, fond of him. We would see nothing unnatural in an infatuation he may have had for David Rasson-Pier. These things are common as hiccups among schoolboys, and are left behind as naturally as they arrive.

Our comptroller reminds me that we have not received your share of reparations for the water damage in Tony's room last August. We appreciate your faith in Tony's innocent part. However, a clear culprit was not found, and all the

"Is there anyone here who specializes in stress management?"

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boys from Cacketts must share the cost of repair.

SEPTEMBER 26, 1941, aboard the Ellen Reilly:

Ocean calm but Sam says we're headed into "weather to pump the boys' stomachs again." Complimented me for my sea legs. Told him R.-P. is faking it to avoid the books. If he were sick, how could he use the ship's rail for a gymnast's horse? He spins his legs right around over the side. Jeffries, Phillips, and Booth have all seen him do it. Gives me the willies. Booth said he wouldn't care if R.-P. lost his balance.

Found another route to the forward cargo bay. Hid in a crate and watched the show. Bales of hay set out in a circle. There appears to be a family circus travelling with us. Preparing its act for America? A small black bear was brought in, muzzled and growling softly. Is this the noise I took for a lion's roar? Can bears survive on ship's rations? There is also a miniature pony that whinnies like a full-grown horse.

I suppose the man must throw knives every day or get out of practice. Tonight the girl was pitiable, with her chin fallen to her chest, and her arms stretched wide, like Christ on the cross, and surrounded by the steel blades delivered in rapid order. By her father? Her brother?

A woman unleashed the bear and placed it on the seat of a small bicycle. Maybe upset by the motion of the ship, it could not keep the pedals going and tumbled over.

R.-P. says I must pay my gambling debt. I'm sure he cheated me.

TONY had recorded nothing of what happened the next day, or the following night when, after lights-out, Rasson-Pier had climbed into the upper bunk with him, whispering urgently, "The others needn't know."

He wrote nothing of his haunted sleep, of this famous athlete poking around behind him with his stupidly swollen thing.

FROM Captain Gerald Hoskins at the London Cage to Tony Hoskins at the Charter Bridge School, September 20, 1943:

Dearest Tony,

Your mother and I would transfer you to another school in an instant if it were reasonably within our power. Our distance, our ignorance of alternatives, and the dean's reluctance to recommend "some inferior academy" all work against us. It is an outrage that your notebook was stolen. We have demanded an apology from Hastie. He seems to us a great blandifier. Believe me, you have nothing to fear from him but his dangerous good will.

It is out of the question for you to return to England now. The Americans have only just begun to appreciate the logic of convoys. In the meantime their coastal waters have become a continent-long fireworks display, with U-boats sinking tankers and supply ships at will. Hardly a time to play "Red Rover, Red Rover, Let Tony Come Over."

There is nothing to be ashamed of in your account of the crossing save the occasional grammatical lapse, though eyebrows are raised at the mention of gambling. The hounds have what they've bayed for, a dry bone. Now let them bury it.

The Dean says you worked admirably

for the Croystons and amazed their church youth fellowship with the force of your testimony. I know your mother's letters are full of admiration for your spiritual awakening. She warns me not to disrupt your faith with petty sophistry. Still, I can't approve a dogma which condemns to perdition all those beyond its pale. This is *entre nous.*

It's no special boast to tell you I've been promoted to Captain. All officers here at the Cage have taken one step up. So, nothing heroic, though I am credited with devising a new purgative for the tight-lipped Germans. I stamp their papers N.R. (*Nach Russland,* to Russia) and their mouths run a torrent.

From Dean Hastie at the Charter Bridge School to the parents of Tony Hoskins in Brasted, Kent, January 24, 1944:

Again the school offers its full apology to you and your son. That Tony's journal should have been taken from his room is altogether unacceptable. That pages were copied and distributed is despicable.

We don't know who stole the notebook. It appeared in the office of our school paper, the *Charter Sentinel,* where the editor, one of our senior boys, cut a stencil of certain pages and ran them off on the mimeograph machine. This misguided chap, who comes to us from Detroit with a warped notion of press freedom, has been relieved of all journalistic duty.

I now believe it was a mistake to badger Tony for his record of the voyage. The notes have only raised the anxiety of the Rasson-Piers, who insist they could not be the work of a twelve-year-old. In their new anguish they suspect the cruel mischief of an adult—a post-dated fabrication supporting the police report of a foolhardy, self-inflicted death.

The family's theory was reinforced by your son's admission that the notebook was not the original, lost at sea, but a substitute provided by Mr. Pardue. Thus, he too is a subject of suspicion. The evidence of a missing page, the ragged edge in the journal, where a sheet was torn from it, adds to our confusion. The more so, since this was apparently part of the entry for October 2, 1941, the day after David's disappearance was first recorded.

We have assured the family that the original notes are in Tony's skilled hand, and that your son is capable of the vocabulary and sentiment, even the occasional poetic flourish. We couldn't swear to the dating of the entries, but have no reason to doubt their honesty. The headmaster and I were disturbed by references to gambling, punishable at Charter Bridge by immediate expulsion. However, we accept Tony's word that nothing of value was to be exchanged, only favors.

That the mysterious travellers belowdecks are transformed into a Gypsy circus seems a wild leap of imagination. Our school physician advises me that the mind under stress (all the Cacketts boys have acknowledged their numbing terror of submarines) may take refuge in illusion.

A copy of the mimeographed notes is now in the hands of the police, who have asked to speak with Tony once more. Be assured that the school's attorney will again be on hand to prevent investigative bullying. If Tony chooses to tell them he remembers nothing, that will suffice. We pray for a return to academic tranquillity.

September 28, 1941, aboard the Ellen Reilly:

The rattle of the paint chippers stopped for a merciful hour this morning. Pardue took advantage of the relative quiet, calling a meeting in his cabin to rally spirits. He never rose from his bunk. The air was horrid.

Our workbooks will be collected tomorrow, though there is not a word or cipher in most of them. Took Pardue some tea this morning and was caught out by Phillips watching from the door of his room. Phillips says it will all come out when we reach Canada, all the broken rules. And there will be whippings. Told him there is no corporal punishment at Charter Bridge. He seemed much relieved. He asked what R.-P. talks about and does he do stunts in the cabin.

Pardue whined pitifully for me to

ARTIST'S NOTEBOOK
BY JOSH GOSFIELD

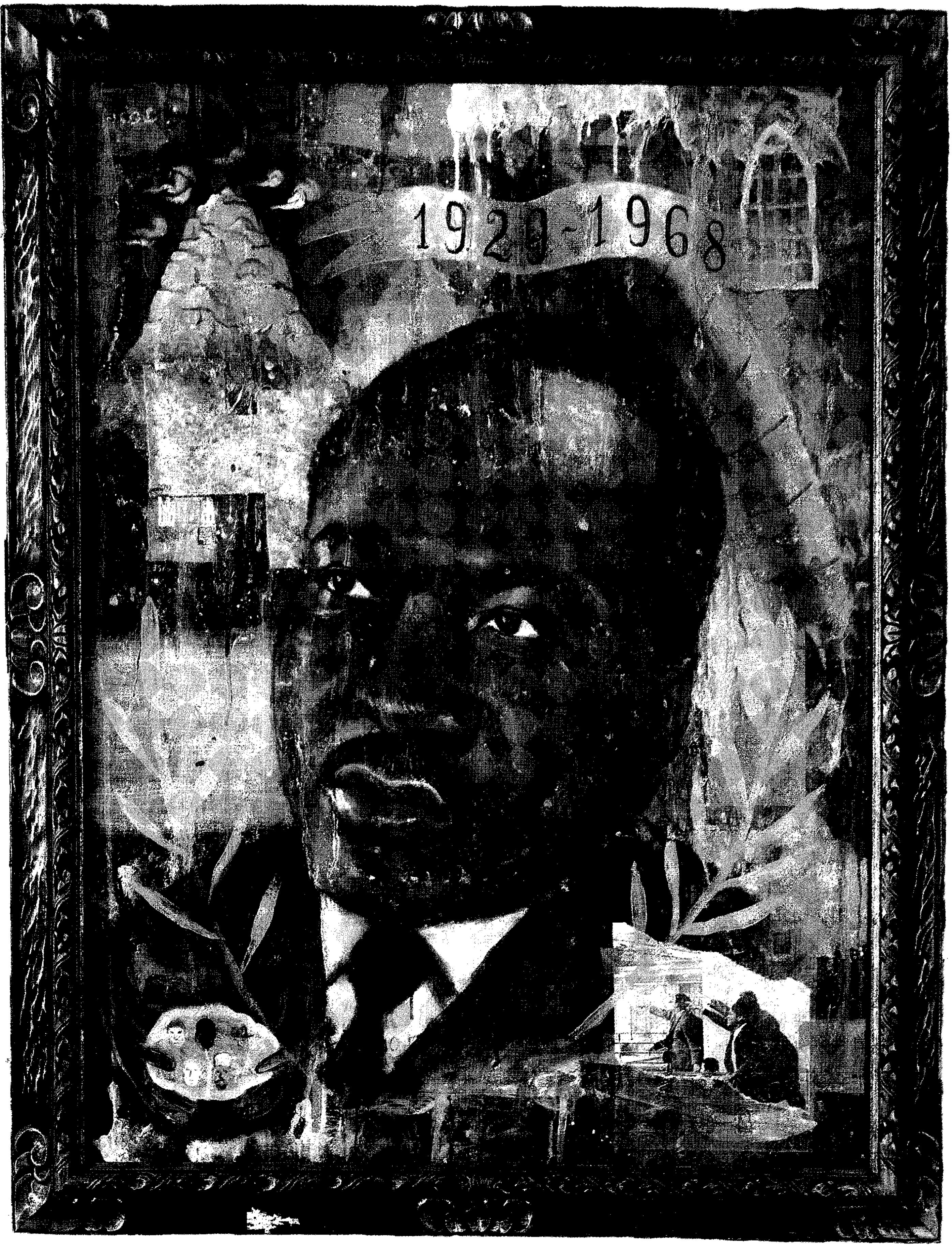
DR. KING

The sixty-fourth birthday of the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.—who died at the still-promising age of thirty-nine—is a reminder of how simultaneously hopeful and tragic the nineteen-sixties were. No recent decade has been so prodigal in its dreams and so murderous of its leaders. While nurturing the ideal of racial justice, the sixties also eliminated, by gunfire, passionate devotees of that ideal both famous and obscure: Medgar Evers; John and Robert Kennedy; Viola Liuzzo; Andrew Goodman, Michael Schwerner, and James Chaney; Martin Luther King.

King, a Gandhian and a Christian pacifist, committed a beleaguered movement to nonviolent struggle. This was hardly the course advocated by a more radical black leadership, which scoffed at the idea that freedom is attainable without violence—or, at least, the threat of it. King's movement did vanquish the system of legally sanctioned segregation and disenfranchisement that had prevailed in the South when he began, yet he knew better than anyone that his overarching vision remained unfulfilled. In accepting the Nobel Peace Prize in 1964, he wondered aloud why the honor had been conferred upon a movement that had thus far failed to win "the very peace and brotherhood which is the essence of the Nobel Prize." He nevertheless remained resolute in his conviction that "nonviolence is the answer to the crucial political and racial questions of our time."

By 1968, King's vision had been, if not shattered, badly shaken. In his last speech, on the evening of April 3rd, he told a gathering in Memphis that although he had been privileged to view the "promised land" from a mountaintop, "I may not get there with you." King's Mosaic metaphor was both prophecy and premonition. The very next day, he was felled by a sniper's bullet. Still, his dream of a just and democratic interracial future—"deeply rooted in the American dream" — is part of what survives of the optimism of the sixties.

—Jervis Anderson



Martin Luther King, Jr., knew better than anyone that his overarching vision remained unfulfilled.

take his tray away. The smell of toast and margarine was making him ill again. Jeffries tried to trip me at his doorway. Called me "suck-bottom."

I can tolerate the pitch and roll of the ship. Also, the further one descends through the lower decks, the less one notices the roll. Sam says the people below are stealing food. The galley is missing a dozen tins of beef. Bear provender? Captain Shad is furious and says we've been roving through his ship against orders. I'm the one. I suppose the others would rather die in their cabins.

I have seen a periscope like a black needle in the waves behind us.

October 1, 1941, aboard the Ellen Reilly:

R.-P. did not return to the cabin last night. A search for him began this morning. Certain we won't find him.

There followed a line obliterated, washed over with ink. How many times had he been asked, "If you wrote 'certain,' were you not certain?" And "Why did you cross this out?" Why should he tell them, "I did not cry with the rest"?

ON the evening of September 29, Rasson-Pier followed Tony down through the maze of passages to the performance chamber, complaining repeatedly of the grease stains the metal stairways were leaving on his trousers.

"Periscope? Girl in a bathing costume? What next, Hoskins?"

"Why didn't Pardue put Phillips with you?" Tony asked him. "Someone more your age."

"I asked for you," he said. "Thought it might give you a boost."

The hero of the Cacketts playing fields had asked for *him*? Anxious about displeasing Rasson-Pier again, he prayed the girl would be there.

She was sitting on a bale, with her back to them. A long black dress appliquéd with red and orange rings gave the effect of contouring her ample young figure in tight-fitting bracelets.

"Run along," Rasson-Pier ordered. "I'll speak to her alone."

"She doesn't speak English," Tony said. "I could try a little French for you."

Why had he wanted to be helpful? He was only pushed aside.

The girl turned and stared at them without modesty. Before Rasson-Pier could sit beside her, she had risen, taken his arm, and was leading him away through the hatch at the far end of the compartment. Perhaps a fortune-teller, Tony thought, leading him to a private place to read his palm.

FROM Dean Hastie at the Charter Bridge School to the parents of Tony Hoskins, Brasted, Kent, January 26, 1944:

I dare to presume a friendship has developed between us in our pursuit of your son's welfare. This letter following close on the heels of the last is prompted

RAPTURE

I can feel she has got out of bed.
That means it is 7 A.M.
I have been lying with eyes shut,
thinking, or possibly dreaming,
of how she might look if, at breakfast,
I spoke about the hidden place in her
which, to me, is like a soprano's tremolo,
and right then, over toast and bramble jelly,
if such things are possible, she came.
I imagine she would show it while trying to conceal it.
I imagine her hair would fall about her face
and she would become apparently downcast,
as she does at a concert when she is moved.
The hypnopompic play passes, and I open my eyes,
and there she is, next to the bed,
bending to a low drawer, picking over
various small smooth black, white,
and pink items of underwear. She bends so low
her back runs parallel to the earth,
but there is no sway in it, there is little burden, the day has hardly begun.
The two mounds of muscles for fast-walking, leaping, lovemaking
lift toward the east—what can I say?
Simile is useless, there is nothing like them on earth.
Her breasts fall full, the nipples
are deep pink in the glare shining through the iron bars
of the gate under the earth where those who could not love
press, wanting to be born again.
I reach out and take her wrist
and she falls back into bed and at once starts unbuttoning my pajamas.
Later, when I open my eyes, there she is,
rummaging in the same low drawer.
The clock shows eight. Hmm.
With huge, silent effort of great
mounded muscles the earth has been turning.
She takes a glittering piece of cloth
from the drawer and stands up. Under the falls
of hair her face has become quiet and downcast,
as if she will be, all day among the strangers,
looking down inside herself at our rapture.

—GALWAY KINNELL

by a surprising turn in the Rasson-Pier case. There is now a theory the boy may be alive.

We are told by the police that there was a family row before the voyage, a shouting match in which David called his parents such names as "pale cowards" and "funny little people." He threatened never to come back if they packed him off to Canada. This was followed by one of his acrobatic demonstrations, a walk on his hands down a stone stairway in front of their home in Kent. Certainly a thoughtless display in front of his troubled parents.

The imaginations of the Rasson-Piers must be racing along with the flow of news and rumor from the families of our Cacketts contingent. I'm told that "Gypsy circus" is oxymoronic, that, while Gypsy children are often sent out to beg, the families never perform or work for money, unless it be in telling the future.

The Rasson-Piers now cling to the frail chance that a rebellious David might have been drawn to, or charmed away by, this band that must have intended to land in America. That they may have seen profit in his gymnastic virtuosity. But who is to say they were Gypsies? Haven't they also been called Lithuanian Jews and Polish performers?

I turn again to Tony's situation. Why do the other children continue to torment him? If the authorities don't trust his written account, how will they credit his oral testimony?

Your child has taken refuge in his faith. All worthy counsel, he avers, comes from the three-person God, though we know he looks daily to his letter box for guidance from you. Your son has lost weight. We try to see that he eats well.

FROM Captain Gerald Hoskins at the London Cage to Tony Hoskins at the Charter Bridge School, February 15, 1944:

Dearest Tony,

We're proud of you. Stick to your guns, and ask yourself this: Why would they have you impeach yourself? What good could come of it? Can the lost boy be brought back? If you find yourself in a compromising box, don't jump out in public. If there is something to say that can cause only humiliation, take it to this higher being of yours, all three of him if necessary. I am dead serious. Take proper nourishment, and hold on. You will cross this way in victory the moment the Atlantic is secure.

EARLY on September 30th, Rasson-Pier had come back to the cabin quite exhausted.

"They don't wash, you know," he said. He sighed and fell asleep. Tony covered for him through the morning, calling "Studying, please" when the others knocked for their morning chats.

At noon, Rasson-Pier was awake and irritable.

"Who doesn't wash?" Tony asked him.

But the older boy was looking into the future. "If you say anything of what's happened in this cabin, I'll report your funny business when I caned you at Cacketts."

"What business?"

"The way you enjoyed it. Even more without trousers."

"I never. Whatever do you mean?"

"Yes, well, who will they believe?" He fell back on his bunk. "Perhaps I'll tell them anyway," he said.

He slept again for several hours, woke, and asked, "What if she's given me the disease?"

"What disease?"

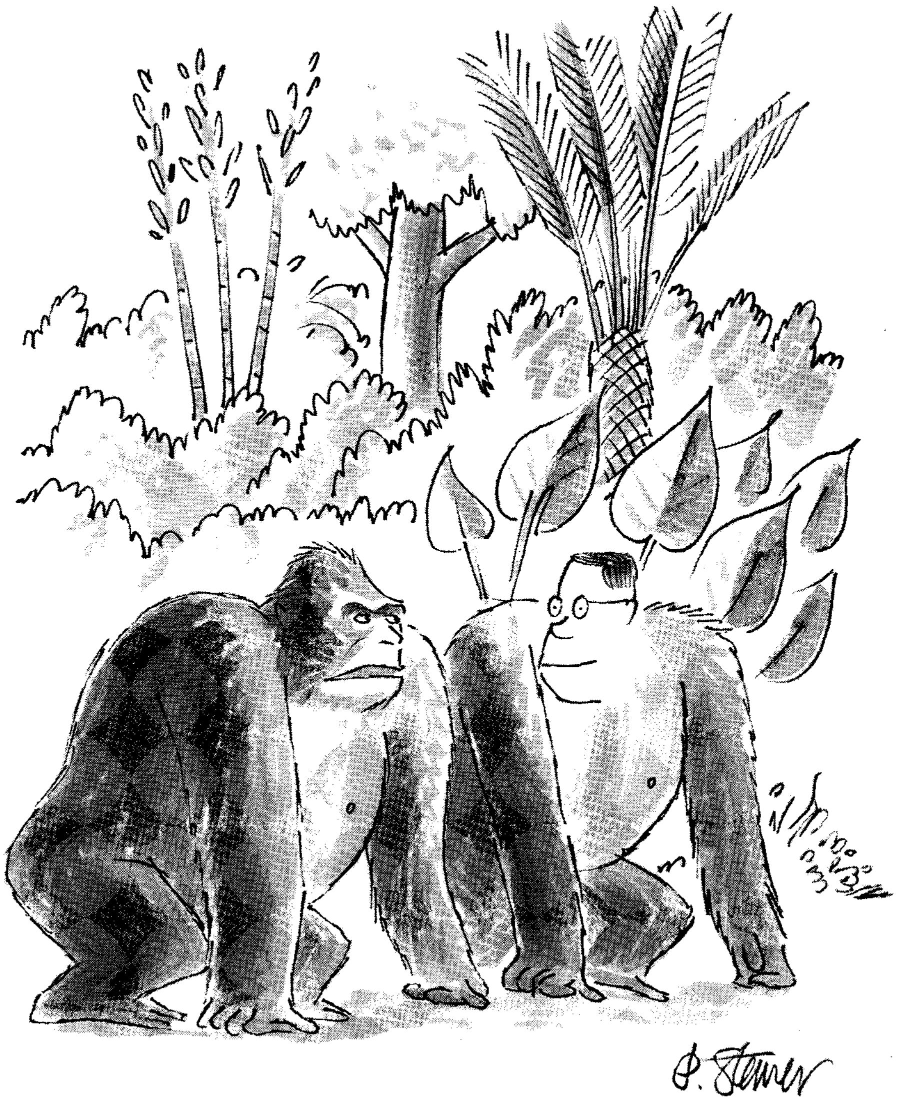
"You sap. The one that takes your brain."

"I believe there's a cure for that."

The older boy nodded slowly.

"Don't look for me tonight" was the last Tony heard him say.

If the girl's odor displeased him, if he thought her infected, why had he gone to see her again? Goatish, Tony had heard his mother say, but would not a



"It's a terrific look, but it doesn't say Great Ape."

goat demand exclusively a mate of opposite gender?

THE October 1st journal entry had concluded: The ship went a drunken path through the glowing sea when the sky was torn into three ragged black sheets by lightning.

TONY had stayed out on the open deck that evening in order to avoid his roommate. Standing at the stern, he watched the serpentine course of the ship recorded in the roiled wake. With the first bolt of lightning, he swung around and saw a figure far up the deck balanced upside down and turning with his hands on the rail, his legs, at that instant, over the side. And someone was standing there, close to him, perhaps the girl. All went black and a moment later they were all brilliantly lit by a second bolt. The spinning body was disconnected from the rail, floating out into the night.

So obvious of Rasson-Pier. Showing off for the girl. Performance was the only language they had in common. Tony made his way forward in the dark, but the two of them had vanished. No time to applaud the trick; the next act of his floating circus had already begun. A spectral ball was gliding down the stay that ran from antenna mast to the bow. It split into two glowing spheres, and then there were three of them, evenly spaced, moving back and forth along the taut metal line. He watched for several minutes until they merged into one again and disappeared.

OCTOBER 2, 1941, aboard the Ellen Reilly:

Is he pestering the dolphins? Sawn into rude portions by sharks? Have I seen the spirit of God in triplicate?

The next page had been torn from the notebook.

FROM Tony Hoskins at the Croyston farm to his parents in Brasted, Kent, August 23, 1944:

The summer has flown. I am two inches taller. Six feet! The second haying is finished. I was allowed to work the rake, an old-fashioned thing once pulled by a horse, this season by an ancient tractor, petrol being available. For two weeks, I've been sitting on the metal seat of the rake and lifting its tines at each windrow with a hand lever. As a result my right arm is appreciably muscled, and I must do something to bring the left into balance.

Yesterday a man came to replace some rotten boards in the north end of the haymow. I was asked my estimate of the barn's height at the point of the gable. I could tell them quite precisely, I said, by measuring the shadow of the barn and that of a pole of known length, then applying simple geometry. By the time I gave my answer, Mr. Croyston had made a calculation of his own and the carpenter was on his way to the lumberyard. My figure was off by half a foot, Mr. Croyston's correct to the inch. So my fancy education is a thing of some amusement here, though Margaret is keen to share my books and ideas.

Last Thursday I was asked to escort her to a "young people's" in the village. It's not the social gathering it sounds. There is some flirtation, but only so much as is possible when you are seated in church pews under the eyes of a preacher.

Between hymns, each boy and girl is expected to rise, in turn, and share a faith-affirming experience. I think I blushed awfully when the minister's eyes fell on me, but I was able to stand and tell again of the three balls of fire over the deck of the Ellen Reilly. By the end of my story the pastor's eyes were brimful, and *I* was embarrassed for *him*. Margaret, seated to my right, took my hand when I sat down again.

FROM Captain Hoskins at the London Cage to Tony Hoskins at the Charter Bridge School, September 10, 1944:

A note to tell you that civilians are crossing again! Given proper escort, it appears to be safe. I've made inquiries, and will find a berth for you the moment space is available on a secure ship. You've been so long there under brutish circumstances. It would be cruel of us to leave you longer than is prudent for your safety. We know that there is still talk of your journal's missing page. I fear the gossips will never give it up.

FROM Tony Hoskins at the Charter Bridge School to his parents in Brasted, Kent, October 5, 1944:

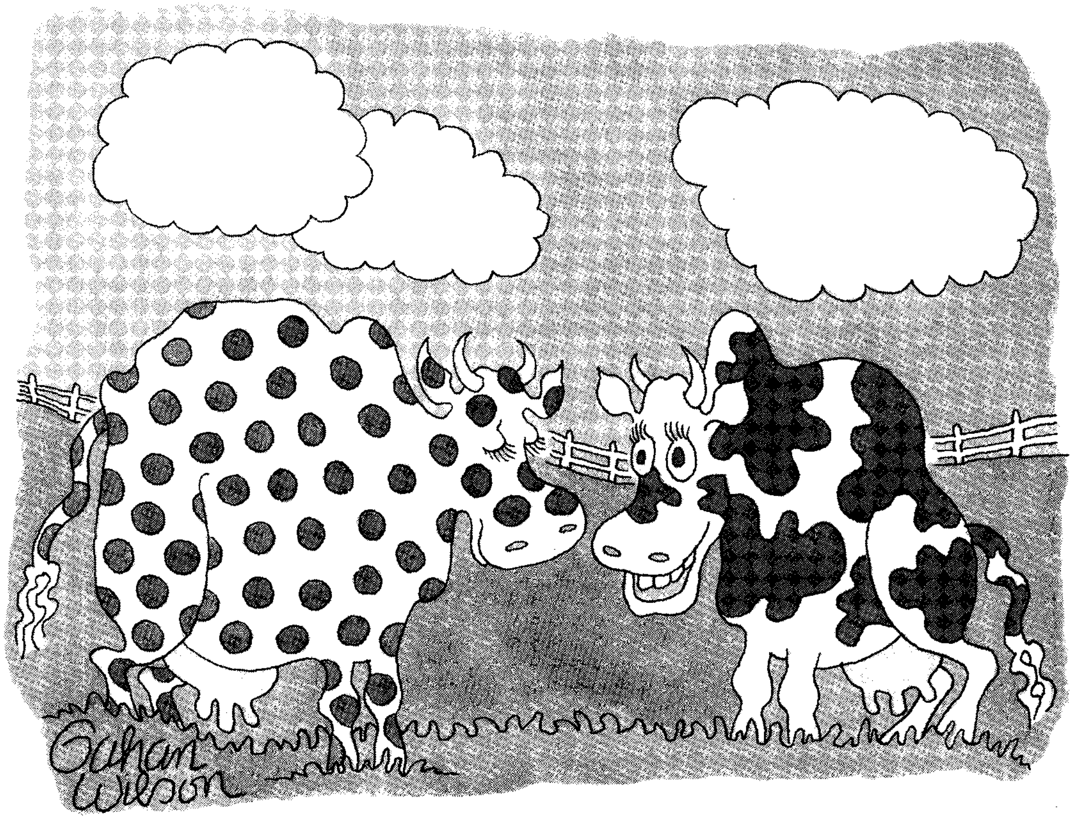
Please do not book passage for me. I'm content and intend to finish here.

Fair questions have been raised, and there is something I want to clear up about the voyage out. When I saw David Rasson-Pier spinning above the ship's rail, I thought he'd learned a new trick. It never occurred to me he was out of control. Not until it was far too late to give an alarm.

The following day I returned to the same place on the deck. Looking down, I saw a row of three lifeboats suspended over the side. One could speculate about David's having possibly fallen onto the canopy covering one of these and climbing back onto the deck below. But the chance is so minuscule. Believe me, he perished at sea. It's too late to raise another slim hope that can only give anguish.

If you must know, the page torn from the journal held my thoughts on the family belowdecks. Particularly the girl, and Rasson-Pier's use of her. I did not invent the girl. Think of her under a rain of knives, and try to imagine throwing knives at me for a living.

The Dean is quite mistaken about Gypsies. They frequently take itinerant work, and are known for their rapport with animals, notably as trainers of circus acts. And when I went down in the ship, I heard "*Raklo! Raklo!*" called out like a crow's warning. It's the Gypsy word for a non-Gypsy boy. I doubt I will see her again, or know what befell her, but we were all Gypsies on that voyage, I now believe, and I would cry "*Raklo!*" now to those who did not make the crossing. Our chaplain says the war has blown seed, good and bad, to all points of the compass, and it remains to be seen what will germinate. High hopes for me. But what of the rootless Gypsies? I like to think of the girl and her family moving across America, performing, escap-



"I love it!"

• •

ing, from one camp to the next.

I'm confident her troupe survives. Almost as certain as I am that David Rasson-Pier is dead. The passage of time has not weakened my resolve not to write to his family. You will have to guess at my reasons.

About my "hard faith," as Hastie calls it. You shouldn't think I ever believed the fireballs over the ship's deck were the actual embodiment of the Trinity. I took them, rather, as a phenomenal sign of Mother's faith. No more periscopes after that. They helped me complete the crossing without going mad. And why should that sign be erased now, by some scientific explanation? Really, for men who profess faith, some of my instructors are quite hopelessly literal.

For all that, I like the teachers here quite as well as the masters at Cacketts. The Atlantic may, as you say, be secured for Allied shipping. Nevertheless, I don't wish to return to England before graduating from Charter Bridge.

From Dean Hastie at the Charter Bridge School to the parents of Tony Hoskins in Brasted, Kent, November 20, 1944:

We shall never hope to understand this war's random terror, why we are spared here in our snug academy while refugees from all walks are driven pillar to post. I do believe we can now take hope in these few boys from Cacketts who were washed up on our shores. I am their Dean, yet I sense that they are children no more. The heat of war has fired them, and they shine with a new hardness and brilliance. Especially your son.

You would not recognize Tony. His second summer on the Croyston farm did wonders. He is quite filled out in athletic proportion, and happy as we have never seen him. It will please you to hear, too, that your son has found common ground with students and masters alike, and can be seen on occasion roughhousing and joking with his mates from Cacketts.

Something has cleared the air. There is less ostentation in his religious assertion. I don't think the other boys ever believed he was guilty of any complicity in the Rasson-Pier tragedy. Rather, they resented his claim to a private audience with God on the voyage out. Without boasting, we give our faculty credit here, in particular our Department of Physical Science. Mr. Theonel believes his lecture on electricity was responsible. As he says, "Knowledge must rush in where dispelled superstition leaves a vacuum." Tony now concedes that the three balls of light he saw on the ship's antenna must have been static electricity, the phenomenon called "St. Elmo's fire."

We think it gave him comfort to learn from our History instructor that early mariners also believed they witnessed holy bodies in the rigging of their ships—the *corpus sancti*, or corposants, as they called them. Tony will be returning to you with a new maturity. Once more, he has our permission to practice his music on the chapel organ. Eventually, I'm sure, he'll be trusted to play for our services again.

The third anniversary of David Rasson-Pier's disappearance will not have escaped your notice. It was observed here by a special prayer at evening vespers, and a reading of this note from the family: "We believe our son perished at sea by his own dangerous devices. To those children who survive, we offer our blessing. Your useful lives must be our monument to David's memory." The school is much relieved by their sad but sensible resignation.

The Charter Bridge students filing in to the final chapel service of the year were surprised to see Tony Hoskins seated at the organ. Excited, they squirmed and whispered in their pews, as if assured of a sacrilege to spice the imminent summer rebellion.

They were disappointed to hear scarcely a hint of the expected irreverence. Buttercup's theme floated over "Faith of Our Fathers," so cleverly hidden in tempo and contrapuntal disguise that no one but the new music instructor was wise to it. From the choir he winked approval at his richly gifted student. ♦

THE CRITICS

MUSICAL EVENTS

A CLOSER PELLÉAS

BY PAUL GRIFFITHS

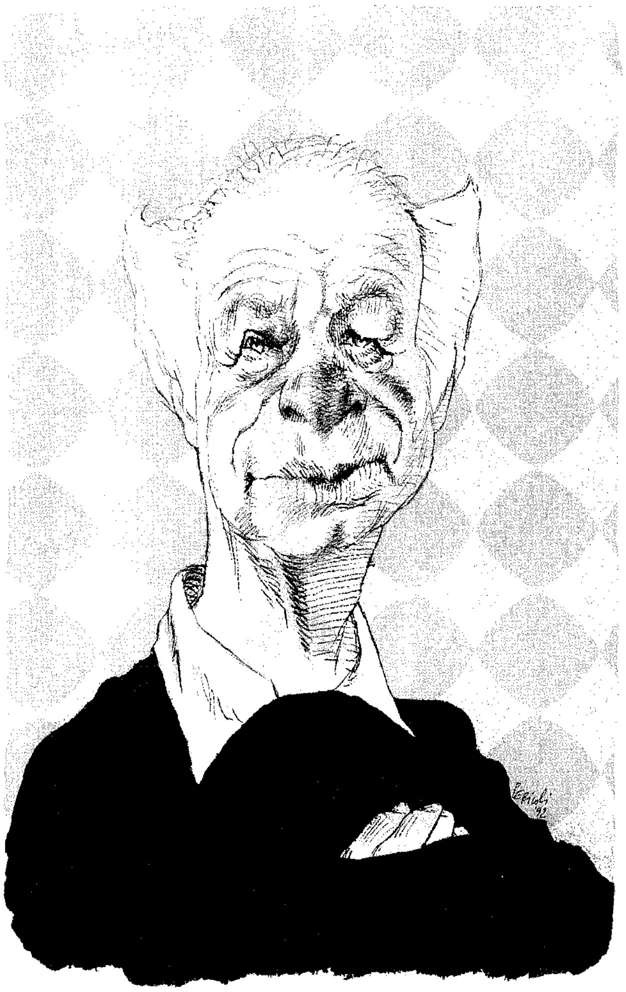
“SIMPLICITY is paramount in ‘Pelléas’—I spent twelve years removing from it everything that might have slipped in *parasitically*.” This was Debussy writing to Edwin Evans at Covent Garden on the occasion of the first performance of his opera there, in 1909. The letter, apparently unknown hitherto, is in the program book for Peter Brook’s new production at his own theatre in Paris—a fitting place for it to come to light, since Mr. Brook is at one with the composer in his ruthless excision of the unnecessary. Debussy goes on to remark that he had “tried to prove that people who sing could stay human and natural,” by contrast with the usual course of things in opera, whose means are “as false as they are grandiloquent.” This view, too, would surely gain the full assent of a director whose dissatisfaction with conventional opera perhaps has less to do with the common complaints of conservative audiences, uncoöperative singers, limited rehearsal time, and short runs than with the size of the enterprise: the demand for big gestures and bold relationships. Rhetoric, for Mr. Brook, gets in the way.

More than thirty-five years have passed since he bade farewell to the opera house, after staging “Eugene Onegin” at the Met, at the end of a controversial decade that had also seen a “Salome” in Salvador Dali’s designs at Covent Garden and a “Faust,” again at the Met, in which he’d tried to respond to the irony—the “art of the wink”—of a composer using waltz time to set the most hallowed treasure of German literature. It was only after he had created his own theatrical laboratory—in the picturesquely moldering Bouffes du Nord, a small nineteenth-century auditorium close by one of the main Paris rail stations—that he found the means to return to opera in his own way, with a cut-down version of “Carmen” in 1981. The new “Impressions de Pelléas” follows from that, with the same principles of multiple casting (so that performances can be given every night, over a long run, by one of three different teams taking the roles of the central trio), treating the score as a guide more than as a recipe, cutting out the chorus, and reducing the accompaniment to a pair of pianos. In other, more essential respects, his treatment of Debussy’s opera follows directly from what he was doing at the Met and Covent Garden forty years and more ago, since always, in all his work, there has been this belief in the soul of a text waiting to be found and awakened. His aim, he has said in connection with “Impressions de Pelléas,” is “to seek to reach the source of the author’s inspiration, which lies beyond the overt form.”

It’s a dangerous adventure—and a lonely one, in an age when musical and theatrical performances tend to justify themselves either as re-creations of former events, exact and faithful in every particular, or as radical reinterpretations. “Impressions de Pelléas” is an undoing of the text—a “deconstruction,” in fashionable terms—but totally without the intention of undercutting or subverting the original. On the contrary, this is a remarkably uncritical evening—uncritical, that is, in its response to the piece, whose freshness, delicacy, mystery, and immediacy it seeks to honor and cherish. We aren’t being invited to contemplate Debussy’s work as an object in its time and place, to understand it as a “case”: a handling of the femme-fatale theme so common in literature at the turn of the century, a response to Wagner, an essay in symbolism, a contribution to the emergent study of the unconscious. Anything that belongs to the opera only by virtue of period, nationality, or genre is likely, rather, to be removed or avoided; anything that diverts our attention from the emotional action, or pretends to limit or explain the emotional action, is, according to Mr. Brook’s artistic morality, a mask, a counterfeit. He isn’t interested in the work as an exercise in tradition and language; he’s interested only in what, “beyond the overt form,” it says and what it is.

These beliefs and principles account in part for his priorities. If nothing is gained by considering “Pelléas” as a specifically French piece, then awkwardness in pronunciation is unimportant, and might even be construed as an advantage, in implying the irrelevance of medium and manner. Mr. Brook’s casts are international: on the night I attended, the French Pelléas (Gérard Theruel) was impeccable, while both the Chinese Mélisande (Ai-Lan Zhu) and the Polish Golaud (Wojciech Drabowicz) were both evidently singing a foreign language. On the other hand, matters that Mr. Brook judges to belong to the opera, rather than to its mode of presentation, are accepted without question, and naïvely. Mélisande tells Golaud in the first scene that she comes from “far away”: O.K., let's have her in a kimono, and portrayed by an East Asian singer. (The two other interpreters of the part come from Japan and Korea.) Or, again, Mr. Brook is content to lose the scenery and the orchestra of the original but accepts the libretto as the voice of Debussy's intentions, and not only of Maeterlinck's in the superseded play. The whole production rests on the assertion that not only is the substance separable from the means but the characters' words may be a truthful signpost to the substance.

However, one can recognize Mr. Brook's untested assumptions and still be stunned by the result he achieves. Or not so much stunned as infected—infected with a slowly developing surprise, which grows after one has left the theatre. The production is so simple that it seems absent; the immediate impression can easily be of an unusual lucidity, but with the diluting disappointment that not a lot was added to the piece. Just about the only new slant comes in the scene that has Pelléas and Mélisande meeting at the well; in this version, Pelléas surreptitiously finds the wedding ring that Mélisande has just lost, and straightaway throws it back into the water. The effect is to implicate him a little more, and a little earlier, in their mutual infatuation, but this isn't much of a modification. Afterward, one realizes that modification and addition weren't the point, that the point was honest transmission, and subtraction—removal of the "parasitic"—in the interests of honesty. One realizes, too, how much one was required to notice in the course of a performance condensed to little more than an hour and a half.



Peter Brook: "Anything that diverts our attention from the emotional action is a mask, a counterfeit."

TULLIO PERICOLI

The geometry of the Bouffes du Nord allows Mr. Brook to make of it a single room, in which all are present, actor-singers and audience together. There's no separation between stage and auditorium: the performing space is a small amphitheatre in front of the proscenium arch and a high, darkening cave behind. So the theatre itself, without scenic illusion, can actualize the contrasts of light and dark, openness and enclosure, presented in the dialogue and the stage directions to echo the contrasts and conflicts of aim and motive within the internal drama. Also, because of the dimensions of the place, no spectator is more than a hundred feet or so from the action: close enough to touch, as it seems by comparison with the customary scale of opera houses. Under these circumstances, every movement of a cheek muscle tells, so that the performers have to be thoroughly in control of their bodies as well as their voices. And it's through that control, as much as through the physical intimacy, that the audience is made not only to watch but to witness.

The contact is intensified further by the removal of any pretense that the action concerns the royal family of medieval Allemonde in an old castle set in a park by the sea. Instead, the stage picture is a formalization of the true conditions of the performance: we're at a musical soirée, where people are singing around the piano. Just one of the two grands in use is visible, toward the back of the stage, across a floor covered with Turkey carpets and otherwise empty except for a few pieces of furniture, a couple of lamps, and a large goldfish bowl—the only concession to symbolism, besides providing a reminiscence of one of Debussy's most familiar piano pieces. The characters, apart from Mélisande, appear as people from the period of the opera's composition, the eighteen-nineties: the men in dark-chocolate three-piece suits (except Arkel, who wears the light jacket of an old man sitting in the sun), Geneviève in a long dress of deepest burgundy. Mélisande's Oriental apartness is a discordant note in the harmony. Another dislocation is the presence of two shallow rectangular pools of water, one on each side of the amphitheatre area. Mélisande and water: these are the two external elements that the drama must try and fail to accommodate. (The setting already suggests the failure—the imprisonment of the goldfish bowl is the only solution this place can find.)

The production's design, by Chloé Obolensky, is beautiful and satisfactory; it also reintroduces—on another, more interesting level—the vagueness that a straightforward realization of the stage directions might find in medievalism. The people we see and hear are precisely placed as members of a family gathering, or possibly a house party, a century ago. What is not at all precise, and certainly not so stable, is the degree to which they are involved in their roles. On a singer's face, in a singer's voice, emotion can leap like a lightning bolt from charade to reality: for instance, from the double enactment of Mr. Theruel playing a sensitive young fin-de-siècle gentleman playing Pelléas to the immediacy of a feeling quite independent of the character. The outstanding value of Maeterlinck's text, in answering Debussy's prayer for a libretto made of "things half-said," is revealed as its open invitation to create, through

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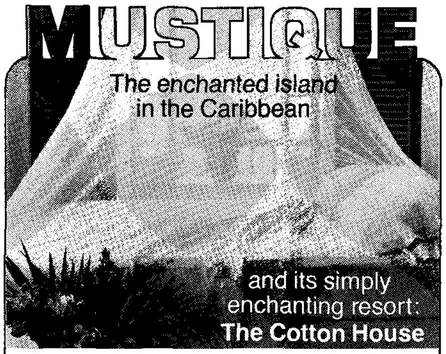

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music and, secondarily, through gesture, a play of fierce, nimble emotions liberated from human subjects. The people of the drama are hopelessly irrelevant; whoever they are, they will be caught in the same trap of love, uncertainty, blindness, and jealousy. Perhaps this is what Debussy meant when he spoke about reaching "the naked flesh of emotion": emotion revealed of itself, not clothed in character.

This requires from the singers a nakedness of their own: a transparency, a candor, an ability to act as glass vessels, showing feelings without holding on to them, and without trying to manipulate them in order to create characters for themselves. They're fearfully exposed. They have to give the impression that they sing, instantly, whatever comes into their heads and hearts, but also that singing is no effort for them, that every movement of chest or throat or lip (and little can be hidden in this theatre) is prompted by expression, not by the needs of vocal technique. Everyone involved in the performance I saw—Bernadette Antoine was the nicely watchful Geneviève, Roger Soyer the disillusioned Arkel—rose to the exacting demands of Mr. Brook's theatrical practice, even if only Mr. Theruel also contributed a distinguished account of the music.

The general modesty of the singing made me feel this was a performance that ought to be seen not in great cultural capitals but in small towns, in places where full-scale opera would never be possible. This seems to have been Mr. Brook's view, too, when, eleven years ago, soon after his reduced "Carmen" opened, he remarked in an interview that although the orchestra was one of the glories of Debussy's opera, "one could start afresh with a version for piano and still do a 'Pelléas' of great vitality. There are many towns that will never have performances of opera because of costs, but people would be delighted to meet small groups around a piano." His new production exhibits the "great vitality"; the irony is that it will be seen not in opera-less towns but—after the end of its run at the Bouffes du Nord, later this month—in Glasgow, Barcelona, Lisbon, Vienna, Berlin, Frankfurt. The hope must be that it will stimulate others, in other places, to do likewise.

In Mr. Brook's realization of his dream, the cast's double presence—as people of the eighteen-nineties and as creatures in a legend—heightens the sensation of a drama under observation, since the observers include not only the audience but also some of the singers, overseeing, as comfortably placed ladies and gentlemen, the others, who are taking part in the sung action. Yniold's role is particularly important in this regard. Through his child's-eye view we all the more easily accept the fluid movement between the reality of the musical party and the illusion of Allemonde, and his response to the drama delicately expresses its curve. Beginning as the ally and companion of his father, Golaud, he gradually loosens those links to associate himself more with Pelléas and Mélisande, and yet his demeanor is always grave and simple. Mr. Brook's casting of this role again suggests what qualities he finds most urgent in the opera: the boy at the performance I attended was vocally frail but exactly right in the way he stood and moved with impassive calm.

While the production uses the possibility of people being present for scenes in which they don't sing (Yniold at the side of his wounded father, for instance), it is extraordinarily responsive to the power of entrances—and, indeed, of non-entrances, of points where a character is already in place as a scene begins. Such responsiveness is attainable partly because successive scenes aren't set off from each other by changes of décor or lighting: the only mark is in the regrouping of people. (An exception to the even flow is the scene in the vaults, done in general gloom by the light of a lantern, which Golaud holds, and shines into Pelléas's eyes in order to emphasize the interrogation.) The changelessness of the stage picture also has an effect on how the music is heard, placing it not with the scenery, which stays the same, but with the people, who move and feel and alter. The score is less a description of light, leaves, wind, and surrounding sea sounds, and more a witness itself of the human drama; in that way, it, too, seems to notice entrances more vividly—especially the entrances of Pelléas, who bursts into scenes more often than anyone else, and does so each time to an outbreak of joy and eagerness in the accompaniment.

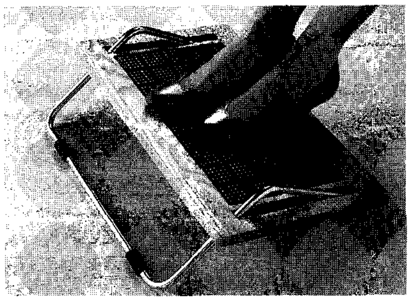
That transfer of the musical intention from nature and depiction to people and passion may be aided by the keyboard adaptation, which not only removes the evocative color of the score but gives it a more bodily, muscular rhythm. This percussive sound world is a reminder of Debussy's fascination with Javanese music, while the presence of instrumental performance alongside the action suggests Asian theatrical forms that the composer is unlikely to have known but that seem no more distant from his work than do the operas of Verdi.

A further effect of the soirée setting is to situate the performance at a time when the piece is not quite finished. We know that Debussy composed the opera in the form of a draft, and that he would play through scenes at the piano for his friends: this is the world into which we're invited by Mr. Brook and his musical collaborator, Marius Constant, with whom he also worked on "La Tragédie de Carmen." One can believe, certainly for the duration of the performance, that this is even a truer way in which to be hearing the opera. Debussy's recitative becomes newly agile and expressive when, with only background pianos in support of the voices, one can hear not only every word but the forming of every word. (The few moments that don't work in this version come when the piece makes compromises with conventional opera, in the climaxes to the two scenes in which Golaud comes upon Pelléas and Mélisande in passionate communion.) The voice-piano format also suggests how Debussy may have been led to the possibility of "Pelléas" through his experience as a songwriter, and especially through the experience of the "Proses Lyriques" he composed to his own prose poems as he was beginning the opera.

As in song, a whole imaginary world can be conjured by a vocal phrase or a fleeting moment in the accompaniment. "Pelléas" is an opera infiltrated by nature, but it matters not at all that nothing of the natural world—except for the immured goldfish—can be seen in the theatre during this production. Golaud has only to sing the word *forêt* to bring memories and images rushing into the empty space, and this confidence in the power of words, or of words and music, respects the confidence of the opera's creators, demonstrated explicitly in the first encounter between the title characters, where Pelléas points out to Mélisande things that the audience can't see, and that would be grotesquely redundant if the audience could see them: a great ship out to sea, lighthouses sending beams through the mist. Mr. Brook simply goes a little further. The love play of the tower scene, where Pelléas is supposed to tie Mélisande's hair into the branches of a willow, is done in a stylized way, with a white veil for the flowing locks: it's obviously a difficult scene to achieve in a production otherwise so artless, but even when less than thoroughly convincing it can still suggest the two playing lovers drawn into a shared fantasy, and one whose sources are in Mélisande's Oriental elsewhere.

Mr. Brook and Mr. Constant achieve their conflation of the work by eliminating two scenes (the only two that could be eliminated without damage to the narrative thread: Pelléas and Mélisande in the sea cave, and Yniold and the sheep) and by trimming others. After the prelude, we move straight to Geneviève's narration at the start of the second scene (Mr. Constant is responsible for the smooth musical joins as well as for the two-piano reduction), and the first scene opens out of that, as if to illustrate what Geneviève is reading in Golaud's letter about his first meeting with Mélisande. This is where the spectral unreality of the characters is taken a step further: they are not only figures being played in a drawing room but figures being played to illustrate a story being told in a drawing room. And this is where that potential layer of vagueness is shocked into insignificance by the immediacy of the emotional moment.

The intercalation of the second scene into the first is the only major change in the original dramaturgy until the ending, where, since there is no chorus, Mr. Brook is obliged to cut the last two or three minutes. Characteristically, though, he makes a virtue of necessity. "But the sadness, Golaud," Arkel sings, "but the sadness of all one sees. Oh! Oh!" And as he sings those gentle sobs the accompaniment turns the page on Debussy's text to become a quiet chiming, which collapses the characters—characters in a drama or in a reading—into the gentlefolk, and calls them all off to bed. ♦



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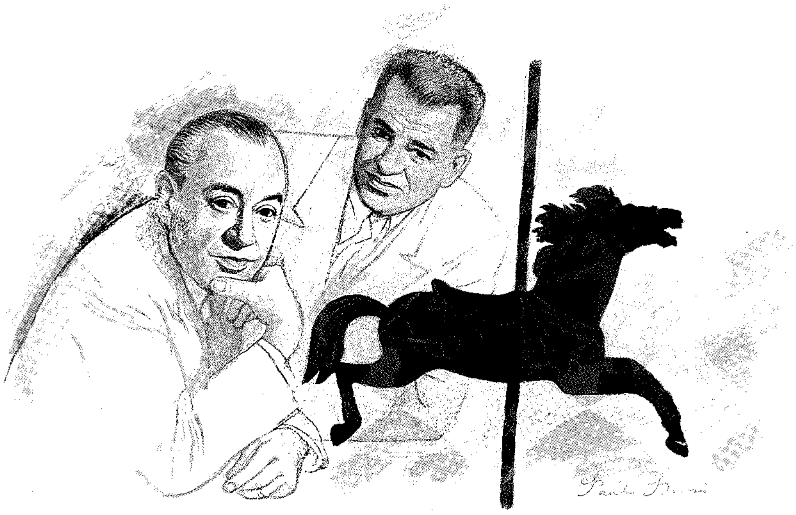
THE THEATRE

ALL THE WAY TO HEAVEN

BY JOHN LAHR

On the English stage, Americans are forever depicted as the clowns of capitalism—predatory, credulous, barbarous, and loud. If there has been a positive portrait of an American by a major English playwright in the last twenty-five years, I'm not aware of it. But when it comes to American musicals, the English can't get enough. Currently, there are five American musicals on London's West End; two more are scheduled for the spring. What's endearing about this fascination is how ineptly most of the musicals are performed. The fundamental problem is spiritual. The British don't believe that everything's coming up roses, and that something's coming—something good—if you can wait. American optimism, which is built on abundance, is not fathomable by the British imagination, because England is a culture of scarcity, and its favored idiom is irony, which insists on limits to expectation. As a result, American musicals in England frequently lose a part of their energy and their resonance in translation. They also lose a lot of their production values, because the English will not—and usually cannot—spend enough to get the shows to work properly. So it's a strange and wonderful twist of theatrical fate that the Royal National Theatre's daring, elegant production of Rodgers and Hammerstein's "Carousel" should blast away the aspic in which the show has been preserved and reinvent this classic "musical play" along darker, more ironic lines, making it compelling for the American nineties.



Richard Rodgers and Oscar Hammerstein II: Before them, there was musical comedy. After "Oklahoma!" and "Carousel," America had musical theatre.

The nine musicals of Richard Rodgers and Oscar Hammerstein II engineered a revolution in American entertainment. Hammerstein was forty-seven when he joined forces with the forty-year-old Rodgers, in 1942. He'd been a co-author of some of the biggest hits of the twenties ("Rose-Marie," "The Desert Song," "Show Boat"), but his fascination with operetta ran aground in the theatrically conservative, and he had a decade of failures. On the other hand, since 1935 Rodgers, partnered with Lorenz Hart, had produced a string of eight sassy hits, including "Pal Joey" and "By Jupiter." The new Rodgers and Hammerstein partnership smashed the old Broadway formula of "no girls, no gags, no chance." Before Rodgers and Hammerstein, there was "musical comedy," in which smart songs and capering star turns elevated frivolity into an art form. After "Oklahoma!"(1943) and "Carousel" (1945), America had musical

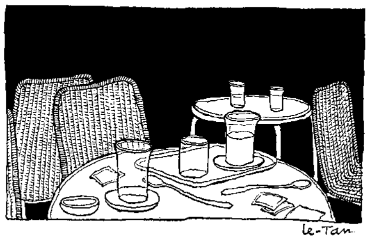
PAUL DAVIS

theatre. Rodgers and Hammerstein's discovery did for the precision of musical production what the interchangeable part did for mass production—insured quality control. The musical became "actor proof," a fun machine in which the makers, not the stars, controlled the product, and in which song, star, and choreography served a finely tuned story. "Song is the servant of the play," Hammerstein said. "It is wrong to write first what you think and then try to wedge it into a story. . . . A rhyme should be unassertive, never standing out too noticeably. . . . If a listener is made rhyme-conscious, his interest may be distracted from the story."

And in "Carousel" it's the story, Hammerstein's faithful, cunningly filigreed adaptation of Ferenc Molnár's "Liliom" (1909), that elevates the show's main characters—the wife-beating carnival barker, Billy Bigelow, and his masochistic jailbait, Julie Jordan—into dramatic literature. Currently, our musicals are full of moralizing but are unconnected to the moral universe of narrative. Character, context, and plot have been replaced too often by idiosyncrasy and abstraction. What memorable characters have emerged from our recent musical theatre? Tevye in "Fiddler on the Roof." Mrs. Dolly Levi in "Hello, Dolly!" Sweeney Todd in Stephen Sondheim's masterpiece of the same name. That takes musical theatre to 1979. Since then, owing largely to the experiments of Sondheim, who was Hammerstein's protégé, the musical has gone down a postmodernist road, which only Sondheim can travel with any sense of occasion. "The form Rodgers and Hammerstein developed tells a story through character and song," Sondheim said in 1978, after he'd begun "to explore the reduction of human character in a situation of its most succinct form," and he added, "It expands the characters, and the characters therefore cause things to happen in the story, and it goes song-scene, song-scene, song-scene." While acknowledging Hammerstein's importance to his own work ("Oscar taught me how to construct a song like a one-act play"), Sondheim deconstructed the Rodgers and Hammerstein musical and gloated over its demise. "Their work appeals mostly to those over fifty, which doesn't bode well for posterity," he said.

But the concept musical that has evolved from the musical play is too often merely a song cycle. Audiences seem to get smaller as the songs get smarter. A smart lyric in the mouth of a stick figure is a theatrical nothing. This mutation has robbed the musical of an essential playfulness and penetration. Atrophy has been declared art, and instead of being a game of show-and-tell the musical has become a song-heavy game of tell-and-tell. Recently, the arrival of George C. Wolfe's "Jelly's Last Jam" opened the musical up to new mythologies and new aesthetics, showing Broadway how to be at once pertinent and populist, kinetic and not camp. And now the success of the reinterpreted "Carousel," which may arrive on Broadway as early as next fall, has thrown down another challenge to the aridity of current musical storytelling techniques. "I don't think anybody in the nineties could recapture the optimism of the forties," says the director, Nicholas Hytner, whose previous musical megahit was "Miss Saigon." "But I would hope that this production might give those people writing musicals faith to approach material again in the way Rodgers and Hammerstein did."

Hytner, who has a fine partnership with the designer Bob Crowley, had three years to prepare for the show. Every inch of the National's Lyttleton Theatre is filled with the painstaking boldness of their imaginative collaboration, and it gives the play a hard scenic and intellectual edge. " 'Carousel' is one of those shows that have outgrown the theatrical conventions of their first performance," Hytner told me just before the show went into rehearsals, last October. "I think it's the best of the great romantic musicals. I was surprised at how tough and real it was when I read it: Julie Jordan *picks up* Billy Bigelow—you could never do that on the stage in 1945. There's a very interesting tension between the sweetness of the music and the powerful sexual undercurrents of the play. In this 'Carousel,' the dark, subterranean sexuality, which has traditionally been kept in the background of productions, explodes into the foreground."



The sense of heat is evoked first by the set: a vast Shaker-blue box fronted by a scrim displaying an abstract blue circle with a wispy corona of red, like an eclipsed sun. It's a powerful, authoritative mark, which foreshadows the sense of smoldering passion Hytner manufactures in the first beat of the musical. Instead of opening the show with the famous dance prelude at the fairground, Hytner brings the curtain up on the claustrophobic, shadowy New England textile mill where Julie and her friend Carrie Pipperidge work. The sumptuous sweetness of Rodgers' "Carousel Waltz" plays underneath that image and underscores the frustrated liberty of these wage slaves. The circular emblem on the scrim transmogrifies into the luminous face of a clock: the natural order of the heavens giving way to the unnatural order of the workplace. So when the clock strikes six and the girls are released into the twilight of the New England spring the thrill of the fairground hubbub and the exhilaration of their momentary freedom gorgeously coalesce with Richard Rodgers' sweeping melody. It's an extraordinary theatrical moment. Suddenly, the empty blue box—a blue that demarcates the sea and sky of this nineteenth-century coastal community—is swarming with carnival life. Bearded tattooed ladies, Uncle Sam on stilts, a house of horrors spin in and out of sight as the carrousel is put together before our eyes. And when Billy Bigelow brazenly scoops Julie up and onto an orange wooden horse, with the merry-go-round's neon canopy fanning out above them like the petals of a flower, the stage is brilliantly set for passion.

Traditionally, Billy Bigelow is cast as a macho beefcake baritone who carries his balls in a wheelbarrow (John Raitt, Howard Keel, Gordon MacRae). But Bigelow, like Liliom, is a lethal combination of pugnacity and panic—he's wild rather than bad. His easy sexual charm and braggadocio hide an anger that he can't explain but that he exhibits in sudden, unaccountable abusive outbursts. "I was looking for James Dean with a voice," Hytner says about discovering Michael Hayden, who was just out of Juilliard when he was given the role. "After we'd had two years of auditioning the 'Soliloquy,' maybe two hundred times, Hayden was the only one who made us listen. Until him, only Chippendales with voices were coming in."

From the moment Hayden throws his leg over the rearing head of the carrousel horse to face Julie Jordan on her ride, his sexual brazenness is never in doubt. He is a strong, if not a seasoned, performer: a fascinating amalgam of the vulnerable and the volatile. He has the pint-size muscularity of Gene Kelly, for whom the part was conceived, and is a restless, lupine presence. This quality is magnified in the ingenious staging of the terrific duet "If I Loved You." Here Billy and Julie are positioned on a rolling hill bounded by a picket fence that climbs sharply upward to a Colonial church in the background. Billy can't sit still. The set, like the delicate music underneath the lovers' stage-managed skepticism, pitches them toward each other despite their efforts to stay apart. Hayden doesn't have a pure, crisp, effortless singing voice, like that of Joanna Riding, who plays Julie, and this takes some of the shine off his dazzling attack. In the seven-minute "Soliloquy," at the end of Act I, in which Billy first imagines himself as a father and concludes prophetically by imagining stealing to provide, Hayden acts the song well, but he is sometimes flat in the upper registers, and this keeps "Soliloquy" from clinching its overwhelming emotional moment. "The more he plays the part, the more his voice will open out," Hytner says. Even now, though, the success of "Carousel" is rooted in Hayden's clever connection of violence to self-hatred, which makes Bigelow compelling and redeemable.

By another stroke of good casting karma, Hytner chose Clive Rowe as Mr. Snow, the subject of Carrie Pipperidge's delightful "When I Marry Mr. Snow." Snow, who rises from fisherman to fishing-fleet owner, is everything Billy is not: dutiful, homeloving, hardworking, bursting with bourgeois dreams of glory. In her song Carrie (Janie Dee) confides everything about him to Julie—or *almost* everything. In this production, Mr. Snow is black. When he pops up in the middle of Carrie's reprise about their imminent wedding, singing, "Then I'll kiss her so she'll know," the pause that ensues announces the surprise of both the characters and the audience. On the first day of rehearsal, according to Hytner, Rowe introduced himself to the cast saying, "I'm Clive Rowe. I play Mr. Snow, and that's the first and last time you'll laugh at that gag." Fortunately, the audience laughs with delighted surprise every night, and this bold piece of non-traditional casting adds a considerable dimension of poignance and charm to the show's embodiment of American pluck and luck. "There aren't many black people in Maine now, and there probably weren't then," says Hytner, who chose Rowe for his ringing tenor voice, with a heroic top A, and his warm, roly-poly stage presence. "But they didn't dance classical ballet as a regular form of discourse, either." The casting is shrewdly in keeping with the provocative racial overtones of "Liliom," where the subplot love interest was a Jew who becomes a successful restaurateur. And the importance of community, which was one of Hammerstein's abiding liberal themes, has its apotheosis in the image of Mr. Snow and his nine variously hued children melding happily into this closely knit New England town at the high-school-graduation finale. "I don't see how you could end a show with 'You'll Never Walk Alone' and be staring at thirty-nine white faces," Hytner says.

Among the many astonishments of this "Carousel" is seeing the National Theatre, which is notorious for overdesigning contemporary plays whose action cannot otherwise fill the enormous stage, function at its full technical and scenic capacity in a show that actually demands large, eloquent space. Hytner and Crowley use the stage revolve poetically, fading in and out of scenes with wonderful images, among them sand dunes, sun-blanched clapboard docks, a party of rowboats, and a spectacular streamlined Heaven, complete with a phantasmagoric tapered Shaker box that holds the stars and rises high into the ozone. The spectacle doesn't push the customers back in their seats—it draws them forward in participation. They have to work to make all the show's articulate emotional connections.

Albert Hubbell

Sir Kenneth MacMillan's restaging of Agnes de Mille's pioneering choreography also makes scintillating links with the story. "I actually saw the original London production in 1950, and it's a very serious thing I've been asked to do—to try to equal what Agnes de Mille achieved," Sir Kenneth said to me last fall, before rehearsals. "Nowadays, dance has disappeared from the musical. Jazz dancing features a lot in musicals like 'Cats.' You can get away with an awful lot, but there's been nothing to really challenge dancers in a way that would stretch their technique. Perhaps this show will restore the balance." Sir Kenneth, who died a few weeks later, in the middle of rehearsals, certainly created exciting challenges for the accomplished dancers in the prelude and in Louise's ballet (beautifully danced by Bonnie Moore and Stanislav Tchassov). But the choreography of "June Is Bustin' Out All Over" and "Blow High, Blow Low" is more athletic than inspired, and it leaves at least one old pro, Patricia Routledge, who plays Nettie Fowler, seeming not too pleased to have her heft shifted about so vigorously onstage.

Rodgers thought that "Carousel" was his finest score, and when the patina of forties bonhomie is scraped away from the stage pictures Hammerstein's adaptation and lyrics also look to be among his best. The scenes, which follow Molnár's traffic plan and use great chunks of his dialogue, are complex and well constructed. And the issues of abuse bring the show right up to the minute. Molnár, who in Budapest café society was rumored to be a wife-beater, tried to face the combination of omnipotence, emptiness, and denial in Liliom, who will admit to neither love nor shame. "Who's ashamed?" he says of his abused wife's weeping to the Heavenly Magistrate (Hammerstein changed this to the more benign Heavenly Friend), whom he meets in the next world, after his suicide, and he goes on:

> But I couldn't bear to see her—and that's why I was bad to her. . . . We argued with each other—she said this and I said that—and because she was right I couldn't answer her—and I got mad—and the anger rose up in me—until it reached here [*points to his throat*] and then I beat her.

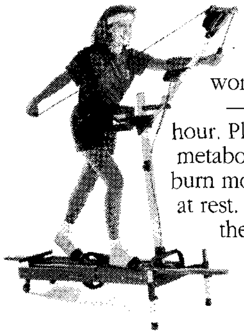
In Hammerstein's version, Billy Bigelow admits perhaps more shame and forgiveness but no more clarity about the perverse hungers of the human heart. Billy is as fierce in his mistreatment of Julie as she is accepting of his abuse. She embodies the romantic ideal of suffering with reward. As she sings in "What's the Use of Wond'rin' ":

So, when he wants your kisses
You will give them to the lad,
And anywhere he leads you you will walk.
And any time he needs you,
You'll go runnin' there like mad.
You're his girl and he's your feller—
And all the rest is talk.

The show, like the song, allows good and bad, joy and pain, to coexist onstage, as they do in life. "It's possible, dear, fer someone to hit you—hit you hard—and not hurt at all," Julie says to her teen-age daughter, Louise, who is slapped by Billy when he comes down from Heaven a generation later to set things to rights. Both Molnár and Hammerstein wimp out on the slap, which is to Louise's hand when it should be to her face. ("We may gain courage with that later on," Hytner says.) Hytner prefers to think that Julie's controversial line about hurt, like all the stories about Billy that Julie tells Louise, is false. But this doesn't answer the questions of balance and of healing, which Hammerstein's finale tries to stage. "I see plays and read books that emphasize the seamy side of life, and the frenetic side, and the tragic side," Hammerstein said. "I don't deny the existence of the tragic and the frenetic. But I say that somebody has to keep saying that isn't all there is to life. . . . We're very likely to get thrown off our balance if we have such a preponderance of artists expressing the 'waste land' philosophy."

From the distance of half a century, the finale seems a far more mature and resonant ending than the saccharine pieties of the film, which is what the general public remembers of "Carousel." Hytner reduces the religiosity by cutting "The Highest Judge of All" and by paying scrupulous attention to psychological detail. With Billy whispering to Julie, as her face lightens, "I love you, Julie. Know that I loved you!" and the Doctor telling Louise and the rest of her graduating class, "Don't be held back by [your parents'] failures. Makes no difference what they did or didn't do," the finale reads as metaphor both for the acceptance of loss and for the need to achieve gratitude for what remains of life after the losses. The moment speaks as powerfully now, in the midst of a pulverizing recession, as it did in 1945, after a world war. As the song says, "Walk on, walk on, with hope in your heart . . . "

The reinterpretation of "Carousel" is a vivid antidote to the boulevard nihilism that has so soured the American musical, which once made legends of hope and now makes legends of collapse. What's important about Hytner's revival is that it doesn't deny the darkness but shows how to fit that darkness into some larger picture, which includes sun, stars, and earth. "I believe in wind and willow trees," Hammerstein once told Sondheim, who didn't. And perhaps, before the musical can evolve beyond Sondheim's blasted joys and lucid doubts, which are now the state of the attenuated art, musical theatre has to return somehow to its big-hearted origins. This is why Hytner's approach to "Carousel" is important to ponder. In it, the murderous and the miraculous share the stage. Ambiguity replaces both optimism and anxiety as the prevailing credo, and in the show's updated modernity both nostalgia and deconstruction are kissed goodbye. "Carousel" is not "through-sung." It submits the audience to the differing pleasures of song and prose. Song is an enchantment (in fact, the word "enchantment" has its root in the Latin for "to sing") that is palpable and long-standing. A song makes an audience feel, but prose makes it discriminate. Those are fighting words to the Young Turks in musical theatre, but "Carousel" belies the so-called advances of the new musicals. Its well-balanced narrative approaches some deeper sense of life, which is theatrically more satisfying for embracing both misery and mystery. As St. Teresa said, "all the way to heaven is heaven." ♦



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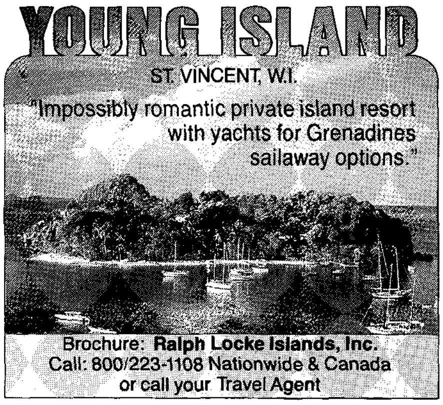

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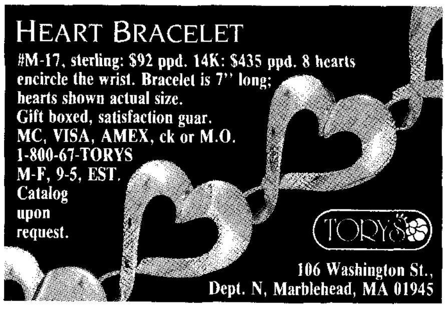

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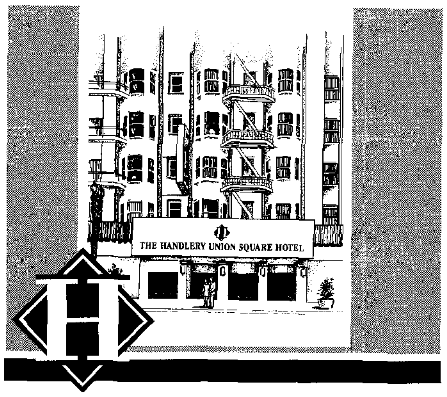
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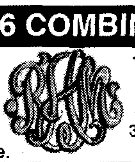

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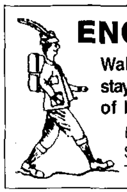

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BOOKS

THINGS, THINGS

BY JOHN UPDIKE

SOMETIMES a title overreaches. "The Evolution of Useful Things," by Henry Petroski (Knopf; $24), offers the reader many fascinating data about human artifacts but no theory comparable to Darwin's concerning the evolution of organic species. Darwin's theory, painstakingly illustrated with the likes of finch beaks and pigeon legs, orchids and quaggas, outlines a process whereby the stupefying variety and complexity of living organisms could have arisen without the guidance of a conscious Maker. The useful things whose evolution Petroski considers all had conscious makers, and the multiplicity of human purposes and intents overwhelms any sweeping rule of manufacture. Not that Petroski—a professor of civil engineering at Duke University, who in 1990 amazed the reading public with a four-hundred-and-thirty-four-page opus on "The Pencil"—puts forth no theory. Repeatedly, he sets up the straw dictum "Form follows function" and knocks it down: "What form does follow is the real and perceived failure of things as they are used to do what they are supposed to do." This attempt to give "perceived failure" something like the central position that "natural selection" occupies in Darwinism does not perfectly work. Confronted with the evolved oddity of many artifacts, such as the useless fins and bravura grilles of fifties automobiles, Petroski must admit fashion into the formula, and this stretches his argument wide: "A myopic obsession with fashion, whether in silverware or steel bridges, can lead to the premature extinction of even the most fashionable form if it does not anticipate failure in the broadest sense, including the failure to be fashionable tomorrow." Well, everything, from *Tyrannosaurus rex* to bustles, eventually fails to be fashionable tomorrow.

The American architect Louis Henry Sullivan wrote that "form ever follows function" in an essay, "The Tall Office Building Artistically Considered," in 1896, against the cluttered background of his era's architectural eclecticism. In the context of a defense of skyscrapers, his "functionalism" proposed that a building should not attempt to conceal its purpose or the technology that made its construction possible. Until the arrival of steel girders, such concealment was scarcely possible; temples, cathedrals, and warehouses were stone inside and out. Then aesthetic conservatism created the falsity of steel-supported buildings that appear to be made of stone, and, on a lesser, everyday scale, of plywood houses clad in a layer of brick. Buildings have sociological and psychological functions beyond the baldly utilitarian: a contemporary church may intentionally evoke the Gothic style of the Age of Faith, complete with needless buttresses; and a bank may echo, with gratuitous pillars, the trustworthy pomp and might of Rome. Even the suavely stark Seagram Building adorns its façade with vertical beams that evoke a sense of structure without being structurally necessary. Technology has given modern builders an overkill of material resources, and the playful postmodernist architectural results have brought to urban centers, in the form of giant blue-glass cutouts, the look of the cities we as children built of paper. The architecture of amusement parks is increasingly admired and paradigmatic.

Sullivan's formula is really a moral proposition: Form, in all aesthetic decency, *should* follow function—function and structure. But buildings, as more or less squarish lumps of shelter catering to human needs, cannot aspire to the naked mathematical beauty of bridges; one of their goals is the psychological comfort of their inhabitants. Artifacts in general are designed not just to accomplish human tasks but to make human beings feel good—at ease, luxurious, rejuvenated, chic. Women's clothing, to take an extreme case, puts a low premium on efficiency, unless attractiveness is taken as a kind of efficiency. The high heel has little to be said for it except that men seem to like it. To keep the package interesting, skirts go up and down, shoulders broaden and narrow. This is not to mention the defiant impracticalities of high fashion, where spectacle and publicity values supersede attractiveness. The actual technological advances in clothing (Velcro comes to mind) are few, yet consumer and producer both require the semblance of frequent change.

In arguing that the evolution of artifacts proceeds through inventors' perception of functional failure (or inadequacy, since total failures don't get to market), Petroski slights two factors: the importance of newness in itself as a desideratum, and the matter of the manufacturer's profit. Complex apparatuses are more expensive and hence more profitable than simple ones; merchandising is structured to discourage the purchase of a stripped-down, minimal model of anything, from an automobile to a toaster. More is, monetarily, more, even if the opportunities for malfunction increase with each new mechanical flourish. Manual typewriters are antiques, and soon electronic typewriters without built-in dictionaries will be also. Cheap computerization has enabled a whole new efflorescence of labor-saving devices. The driver of a modern car need exert no more physical effort than a bather lying back in his bath; the engineering ingenuity that went into the automatic transmission is now bent on cars that steer themselves, with the driver not merely sleepy but asleep. Push-button mechanisms, in rendering our musculature obsolete, necessitate yet another line of products: exercise machines. In his last chapter, "Always Room for Improvement," Petroski cites a column by Russell Baker complaining, apropos of Baker's office's new telephone system, "of the horrors created when engineers refuse to leave well enough alone." Petroski, like a loyal engineer, replies that he has slowly accommodated himself to the complexities of *his* office's new telephone system, and pronounces its improvements—musical and speedy push buttons, automatic call forwarding and redialling, voice mail—genuine. He writes, "The evolution of the overwhelming majority of artifacts, in both form and function, is fundamentally well intentioned and for the better."

It would take a dour reactionary indeed to deny that. If polyethylene wrapping often frustrates human fingers, and levered drain plugs are more trouble and leakier than old-fashioned rubber stoppers on a chain, and computerized catalogues in libraries seem to take more time and come up with fewer titles than old-fashioned card catalogues, these must be momentary kinks, to be soon ironed out. No less an authority than Thomas Edison stated, "Discontent is the first necessity of progress. Show me a thoroughly satisfied man—and I will show you a failure." If man were an artifact, no doubt he would have improved himself out of existence by now. Petroski's charming volume of artifactual meliorism ends with the glad news that certain alert inventors and manufacturers are at last producing a host of objects—garden shears, kitchen knives, corkscrews—designed for left-handed people, a minority who have been too long fumbling around in a world made for right-handers. So a new frontier of discontent is being plundered. "In the meantime, we tend to accept that ours is a technologically imperfect world and live with its minor annoyances."

For example, when we eat. In the chapter that deals with tableware, "Patterns of Proliferation," the evolution of useful things is shown to hold almost as many riddles as Darwinism. The millennia since early man hacked up raw meat with a flint proto-knife and poked it in the fire with the proto-fork of a pointed stick have evolved, in our era, a standard fish knife whose form is, Petroski confesses, "highly specialized if mysterious." The fish fork's wider tines are justified by its greater efficacy in lifting crumbling fish pieces to the mouth, but the dull, broad, and offset fish knife's advantage over the ordinary table knife, either in cutting or in deboning fish, appears problematical. Like the crocodile and the horseshoe crab, the fish fork and knife have survived waves of extinction, as the Victorian plethora of tableware gradually thinned. Petroski quotes Dorothy Rainwater, a specialist in silver:

> By 1898, the Towle Company's "Georgian" pattern included 131 different pieces. . . . There were nineteen types of spoons for conveying food to the mouth, seventeen for serving, ten pieces for serving and carving, six ladles, and twenty-seven pieces for serving that were not classified as ladles, forks, or spoons. One can sympathize with the hostess of that day in trying to be sure that croquettes were not served with a patty server, or cucumbers with a tomato server.

An illustration—from Noel D. Turner's "American Silver Flatware, 1837-1910"—of thirty-five forks includes six kinds of oyster fork and particular-pronged forks for terrapin, lettuce, ramekin, mango, and ice cream. Another illustration shows four types of sardine fork, five knives for jelly, and seven servers, scoops, and knives for coping with cheese. By the nineteen-twenties, Emily Post had to step into the melee and decree a four-fork, four-knife, four-spoon basic table setting. Long after the Middle Ages, knives, both pointed and broad, served to stick and lift the food as well as cut it; in recent centuries, the leftmost tine of some forks has hypertrophied so as to take on, for right-handers, a cutting function. For all this refinement and revision, eating continues to be a somewhat awkward operation, with a Continental and an American style of fork-handling coexisting, and the Asians remaining loyal to chopsticks (which, I have noticed, come in Chinese, Japanese, and Korean styles, the Korean being the most elaborate). Petroski concludes this chapter on an uncharacteristic note of discouragement: "Many of the most contemporary silverware patterns appear to be designed more for how the pieces look than for how they work, and this would appear to contradict every rational expectation of technological evolution."

If tableware shows populist commercialism at its most teeming and irrational, the zipper stands as a singular tri-

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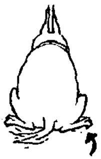

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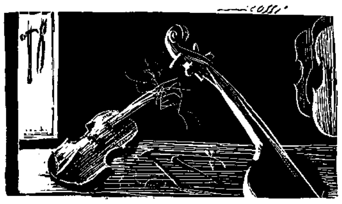


umph of dogged engineering. Elias Howe, the inventor of the sewing machine, had patented as early as 1851 an "automatic continuous clothing closure," but the invention—unworkable, presumably—lay fallow. It was one Whitcomb Judson, four decades later, who took up the torch; his patents on a chain of clasps that would open and close continuously, and free mankind from the tyranny of button shoes and buttonhooks, began in 1893 and sorely stressed the financial resources of his primary backer, Colonel Lewis Walker. Judson's many versions of a "clasp locker," or "slide fastener," based on the hook-and-eye principle were bulky and tended to pull open inopportunely. It was a Swedish-born engineer, Otto Sundback, who in 1913, working for a revamped company still fuelled by Colonel Walker's money, arrived at the solution: a series of tiny spoon shapes guided by a triangular slider to fit one into another. The patent followed in 1917, the name "zipper" in 1923 (invented by the president of the B. F. Goodrich Company, which was marketing the device on rubber galoshes), and the trade name Talon in 1937. Oddly, it was not until the thirties that the supple fastener was taken up by clothing designers, led by Elsa Schiaparelli. "Her 1935 spring collection," we are told, "was described by *The New Yorker* as 'dripping with zippers.'" The zipper might possibly—I remember reading once in the *Reader's Digest*—have gone forever uninvented; for Henry Petroski it makes a triumphant story of a perceived failure (the troublesomeness of button shoes) leading, through many intermediary failures of design, to an artifact now ubiquitous and seemingly indispensable.

So, too, in his telling, the wheelbarrow, the can opener, the aluminum beer can, Scotch Tape, Post-it notes, the paper clip. In the last instance, the perceived failure was the tendency of pins, which are quaintly still used in some backwaters for holding small batches of paper together, to prick the fingers. The arrival of the familiar bent-wire clip, in the loop-within-a-loop Gem design, was, in the eighteen-nineties, quick but divagatious; we smile at the curious, wormy shapes that were earnestly patented. The Gem shape shows up in the patent records, in 1899, as incidental to the design of a wire-bending machine for making the clips. A century later, alternative designs and subtle refinements seek to remedy the clip's perceived failures—its tendency to tear the paper, to bulk up a stack of clipped sheets, to slip where the sheets are too many. The failures of two recent inventions in packaging, the polystyrene-foam "clamshell" box that McDonald's perfected for its hamburgers, and the detachable beverage-can pull tab, came in the macro-realm of ecology; both clamshells and pull tabs amounted to too much non-degrading litter, and under civic pressure gave way, respectively, to revived paper packaging and to integral pop-top openers—humble marvels, these last, of metals engineering.

Petroski is an amiable and lucid though somewhat windy writer. Like a helpful lecturer, he makes the same point more than once. He does not always avoid tech-speak: "The formulation of the design problem is but a structured articulation of the objective of removing a shortcoming from an existing design." In another sentence he puns possibly a millimetre to excess: "It seems in part to be a matter of familiarity's breeding content, at least when it comes to inanimate artifacts whose forms our hands have often grown to glove." And he can wax literary: "Which will become the roads more traveled by will depend on style and conformity that designers, no less than poets—if only in retrospect—may lament." But perhaps he does belong with the poets, extending, in the manner of a celebrant as well as that of a naturalist, the Romantic embrace of nature to the invented, manufactured world that has become man's second nature. ♦

A THOUGHT FOR THIS WEEK

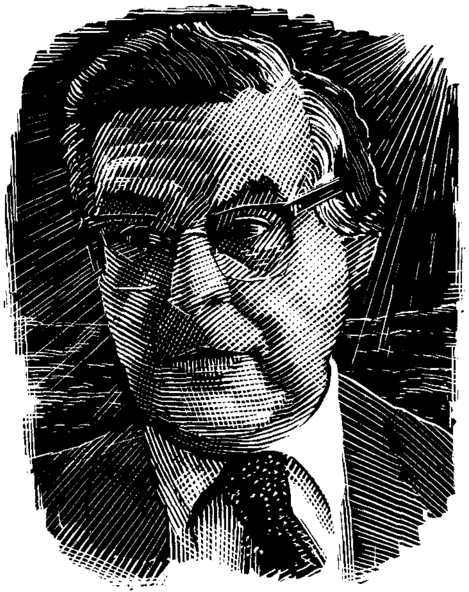
[*From the Louisville* (*Ky.*) *Courier-Journal*]

The total number of births in the 1950s was larger than had ever been seen in the United States, but this was due mostly to the number of women having babies.

ELECTION AND REPROBATION

BY HELEN VENDLER

ENGLAND and America were once closely allied in poetic life. Both Eliot and Frost published their first books in London, and when *Poetry* was founded, in Chicago in 1912, with Pound as its London talent scout, it was as likely to publish W. B. Yeats or Ford Madox Hueffer (later Ford) as William Carlos Williams or Marianne Moore. But as the century wore on, American modernism began to set the poetic tone, and America no longer needed to direct its eyes toward London as the imperial capital of the English-speaking world. America, in short, began to act out the aesthetic rebellion against literary domination which other colonies—Ireland, India, the Caribbean, Africa—have also found necessary.



"If there is one sort of rhetoric for which I have been fitted by nature as well as nurture, it is the Jeremiad."

ELLIOTT BANFIELD

Modern American poets looking to do an end run around London—and around American Protestantism, too—turned first (as Longfellow had before them) to France and Italy, with notable results in the generation of Pound and Eliot. The brief vogue for Dylan Thomas and W. H. Auden among Americans who came of age in the fifties waned rapidly, and during the sixties most American poets went farther afield for lyric models—to South America, Germany, Russia, and Eastern Europe. With the dissolution of the British Empire, English poets had definitively lost what cultural critics would call their literary hegemony. American publishers became less eager to publish English poetry, and American journals less eager to print or review it. In the long run, this may not matter: powerful poets are so thin on the ground in every country and in every generation that, eventually, they are eagerly sought out by readers worldwide. In the short run, though, it means that our young writers are ignorant of notable British models of poetry in English—models useful because culturally different. American readers may literally not know of the existence of a Philip Larkin or a Donald Davie.

Larkin's "Collected Poems" came out posthumously. We are fortunate to have Davie's "Collected Poems" (Chicago; $40 cloth; $14.95 paper) while Davie is still alive. Davie was born in Yorkshire, in 1922, and was educated at Cambridge; his readable and outspoken autobiography, "These the Companions," takes the reader through his youth, service in Murmansk and Archangel as a communications officer in the Royal Navy during the war years, and his return, after marriage, to the Cambridge of F. R. Leavis. ("*Scrutiny* was my bible, and F. R. Leavis my prophet.") Davie took a Ph.D. at Cambridge, and afterward there were many teaching years: first at Trinity College, Dublin, then at Cambridge, the University of Essex, Stanford, and Vanderbilt. However, his main activity through these years was writing a poetry of mingled fierceness and self-contempt. This curious mixture is what keeps the reader of Davie alert. Davie says in "Puritans," the last chapter of his autobiography, "The Calvinist doctrines of elec-

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tion and reprobation may be false and brutal in every other realm of human endeavour; in the arts they rule. . . . In the arts, as between the genuine and the fake, or between the achieved and the unachieved, there cannot be any halfway house.” Even those who agree with him on this point may not be as confident as he in personal judgments of genuineness, or as joyously eager in battle on these issues.

Davie says of himself that “if there is one sort of rhetoric for which I have been fitted by nature as well as nurture, it is the Jeremiad,” and he continues:

> I have made a comfortable career out of crying in saturnine tones, “Woe! woe!” or “It is later than you think,” or “Things are going from bad to worse.” And a whole generation of English writers grew up along with me in this modestly profitable skill. The best of us are those, like Kingsley Amis or Bernard Levin or Anthony Burgess, who mock their own gloomy irascibility even as they articulate it.

Davie’s voice—judgmental, ironic, epigrammatic, humorous, self-lacerating—speaks always with reference to an inhuman perpendicular standard that itself goes unquestioned. It is not a standard of Beauty or Truth; Davie is a poet of the third member of the Platonic triad, Justice. Born of Dissenting stock, he distrusts fluency, loquacity, “charm,” and permissiveness, and sides with taciturnity, measure, strictness, and law. Yet he himself is often unmeasured, irritable, and quarrelsome, rather than equable, while in another dimension he allows himself to be genial—even “charming.” Davie’s sense of both public and private sin is the source of his desire for public and private justice. These inner conflicts—as the poet plays both reprobate and judge—give Davie’s best poetry its tension, its constriction, and its self-blaming force.

Here, for instance, is a poem of acid self-analysis comparing his behavior with his wife’s:

I assert that such is the case:
I seem to have more resources;
I thrive on enforcing the more
The less naked the force is.

Mutinies, sulks, reprisals
All play into my hand;
To be injured and forgiving
Was one of the roles I planned.

His own roles, planned or not, are baffling enough to Davie to make him cast round for illuminating comparisons of himself with others. One of those others is Piranesi, repetitively drawing his claustrophobic prisons:

The effect remains, as ever, gaunt and fierce.

Those were his true proclivities? Perhaps.
Successful in his single narrow track,
He branches out, but only to collapse,
Imprisoned in his own unhappy knack,

Which, when unfailing, fails him most, perhaps.

Even Perfection, if it is perfection in a “narrow track,” can be judged deficient, and Davie thrashes even against his own double. On the other hand, he finds more heartening doubles, one of them the blind and deaf Helen Keller. It might seem, Davie says, that the twentieth century has abjured language:

The Gutenberg era, the era of rhyme, is over.
It’s an end to the word-smith now, an end to the Skald,
an end to the erudite, elated rover
threading a fiord of words.

And yet Keller stands as an example of one who reclaimed wordlessness with language:

You were by force of circumstance, by force
of your afflictions, I suppose, the most
literary person ever was.
No sight nor sound for you was more than a ghost;
and yet because you called each phantom’s name,
tame to your paddock chords and colours came. . . .

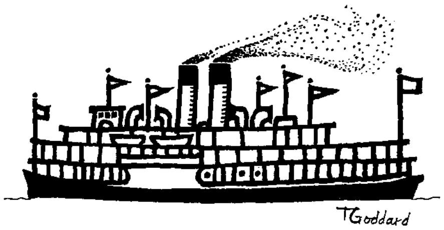
You, who had not foreseen it, you endured it:
a life that is stripped, stripped down to the naked,
asking what ground it has, what has ensured it.
Your answer was: the language, for whose sake it
seemed worthwhile in Tuscumbia, Alabama,
month after month to grope and croak and stammer.

For Davie as a poet, language is reclaimed only by the “grope and croak and stammer” of those who, following Pound’s injunction, try to “make it new.”

Davie is frequently grim, about himself and poetry alike, but he can also relish happiness—the happiness of prospective travel, for instance, in “A Spring Song” (with its epigraph from Pope, “Stooped to truth and moralized his song”):

Spring pricks a little. I get out the maps.
Time to demoralize my song, high time.
Vernal a little. *Primavera.* First
Green, first truth and last.
High time, high time. . . .

High time and a long time yet, my love!
Get out that blessed map.
Ageing, you take your glasses off to read it.
Stooping to truth, we potter to Montoire.
High time, my love. High time and a long time yet.



This is one of the more contented marriage poems. Others yield a powerful narrative of a life lived within the mutual devotion and mutual injuries of a long companionship—a difficult narrative to sketch from the inside, especially if the poet subscribes to discretion. “Penelope” is Davie’s meditation on constancy in a time of marital “dryness”:

Charity for
A while; then, grace withdrawn;
The flow, and then the ebb.

What wove the web
Now frays it, with as much
Devotion in each breath.

Long-absent Death
Veers in the offing; nears
And goes off, to-and-fro.

And all right, so;
This being out of touch
Alone tests constancy.

The epigrammatic distance in such a passage is a legacy from the stubborn astringency of the North, from which Davie comes:

For one who espouses the North,
I am hazy about it, frankly. It’s a chosen
North of the mind I take my bearings by,
A stripped style and a wintry.

One might find this a deflected sort of self-praise if Davie did not add immediately:

The style is decadent almost,
Emaciated, flayed. One knows such shapes,
Such minds, such people, always in need of a touch
Of frost, not to go pulpy.

The pulpy, the “warm” (in the vulgar sense), and the inner coarseness of a consciously adopted “common touch” are all anathema to Davie; distrusting the organic, the vegetative, and the luxuriant, he prefers the Poundian metaphor of the poem as sculpture. Poems are "a space / Cleared to walk around in":

Their various symmetries are
Guarantees that the space has
Boundaries, and beyond them
The turbulence it was cleared from.

This is from Davie's "Ars Poetica," an elegy for the sculptor Michael Ayrton. Reluctantly, Davie adds that we are now unlikely to encounter again "the enormous/Louring, resonant spaces/Carved out by a Virgil."

The wish to be spacious in epic panorama has led Davie to his least successful vein—the topical historical poem. Versified meditations out of Francis Parkman and brief biographies are so condensed as to be (as Lowell sometimes was) unintelligible. Here is an anticipation of Cooper's novels out of Scott, in the poem called "Frontenac":

Heart of Midlothian, the milky
  mother
(Sir Walter's Doric) of sane master-
  pieces
Fed at that flaccid udder, Walter
  Scott,
Great lax geometer, first plotted
  them,
Triangulations that explode
The architect's box of space, and by a
  torsion
As bland as violent sprain
Narrative time and the archives'
  single slot.

Verbal torsions and sprains like these sometimes result from Davie's wish to be terse, "plotted," witty. Always, his verse pits rhythm against compression, trying to constrain them into mutual accommodation. When the accommodation works—as in Davie's greatest poem, the self-portrait "In the Stopping Train"—the accomplished grudging voice (halting, like the local "stopping" train) finds its rhythmic equivalent in trimeters bearing a musical rest, or stop, after each line:

I have got into the slow train
again. I made the mistake
knowing what I was doing,
knowing who had to be punished.

I know who has to be punished:
the man going mad inside me.

Torment him with his hatreds,
torment him with his false
loves. Torment him with time
that has disclosed their falsehood.

Time, the exquisite torment!
His future is a slow
and stopping train through places
whose names used to have virtue.

This poem of murderous self-accusation exhibits Davie's "emaciated, flayed" style at the height of its powers. But it is not by any means his last self-portrait. Here is a different, more self-forgiving view, in an elegy for his friend Kenneth Millar (Ross Macdonald):

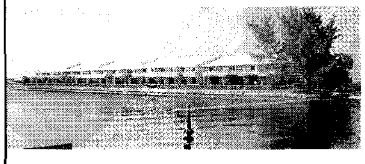
Walking about the emptied house I
jangle softly at each heavyish step,
an old plough-horse, some parts of
  his harness upon him,
who strays, tired out but happy with
  that, through musky
honey-shot glooms of a barn where,
  though he
strays only idly towards it, sweet hay
  will be found in a crib.

These looser metres of Davie's, accompanied by "the chink of pocketed coins" remembered from his father's similar walks through the house, reflect something less dismal, less tidy, than the self-flogging trimeters of "In the Stopping Train." Davie fears that such relaxation may be merely the sloth of age, but we may also see it as a sign of benignity:

[Sloth] does no harm; it spares
The inattentive world
One more triumphant play
Out of my one strong suit,
Sardonic paradox.

Yet, as though to rebuke the dilation of middle-age complacency, Davie entitled his last full collection (based in large part on the Psalms) "To Scorch or Freeze"—those two unlovely Christian visions of the end of the world. Davie's religious adherence (which shifted from Baptist to Anglican) may be incomprehensible to some of his readers, but the vehicles it offers him are old and deep ones for rendering experience. And they provoke new reflections from Davie. Why, he wonders, does the Holy Spirit, represented by Jesus as the Comforter, descend on the apostles as a blast of wind? Davie's poem "The Comforter," the strongest in "To Scorch or Freeze," represents the Comforter as that wind of alienation and disorientation known to every *déracine*, to everyone who is "not at home in the grid."

That grid of the ordinary, first felt as home, becomes—to the person fated to be reformer, saint, artist, eccentric—an intolerable Procrustean bed. The first intuition of the *déraciné* is one of a devastating loneliness, the disintegration of "home." Only later will the exceptional person see loneliness as the first sign of



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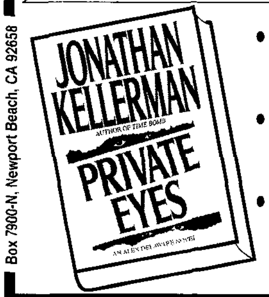

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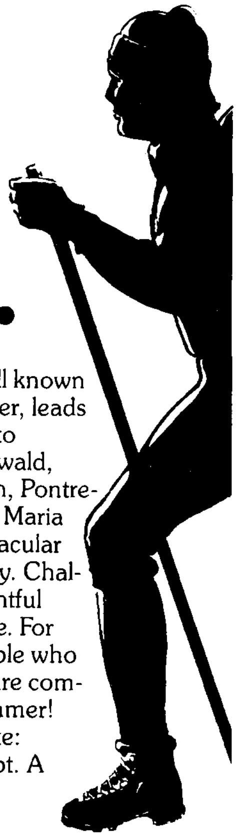

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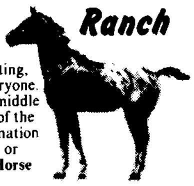

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vocation, the first breath from the world to which he will eventually belong. Whereas the Father and the Son are perhaps God's "masks / compassionately adapted / to our capacities," the Holy Spirit is frightening:

> And indeed He is the strangest
> of the Three Persons,
> the most estranged. . . .
>
> Integration, fulfilment
> have nothing to do with this Person;
> cure, or harmony—nothing
> like that is intended.
>
> Invasion is His note:
> disintegration.
> A wind from the outside corners
> of the human map;
> disorienting;
>
> His strangeness for the comfort
> of those not at home in the grid.

A poem as spare as this depends almost entirely on its succession of mots justes: "strangest," "estranged," "invasion," "disintegration," "disorienting," "strangeness"—all set off against that resonant and etymologically rich word "comfort." "Stay me with flagons, comfort me with apples"; "The Father . . . shall give you another Comforter"; "Comforter, where, where is your comforting?" As a poem about the wind of poetic inspiration in its devastating instead of its comforting aspects, this ranks as one of the most penetrating analyses of that withering and revivifying wind named by Shelley "destroyer and preserver." To those "not at home in the grid," the lines offer the courage and encouragement of a poet who has encountered the wind and its painful enlightenment.

Much of Davie is perhaps too English for many Americans—his volume called "The Shires," for instance, summons up in turn each shire in England. Or an American may balk at Davie's unrepentant respect (part of a long quarrel, it's true) for Pound. The mentally ill Pound in the Pisan cage may be a figure of pity, but hardly, as Davie will have it in "Ezra Pound in Pisa," of "excellence":

> Excellence is what
> A man who treads a path
> In a prison-yard might string
> Together, day by day,
> From straws blown in his path
> And bits of remembering.

Yet most of Davie is not inaccessible to Americans, and he should have a place in our anthologies as a remarkable modernist poet. When Davie has been noticed in the United States, it has usually been by other Poundians (a sect unto themselves) or by neo-formalists, those who advocate regular poetic measures as a principle of absolute value, saving the world from the depravity of free verse. Davie, though loyal to a "sculptural" aesthetic, and a frequent practitioner of counted measures, deserves better than these supporters. He has never sequestered himself from experiment in free well as in formal verse.

Davie has been a notable apologist for Russian poetry; and though his technical debt to Pushkin, Mandelstam, and Pasternak can be judged only by those who know Russian poetry in the original, the elegance and worldly sangfroid of Pushkin can be seen in him, as can Mandelstam's terseness of imagery and Pasternak's capacity for sketching a mood in a few lines. The chief modern British influences on Davie are the awkward but unyieldingly honest Hardy (on whom Davie has written with passion and discernment), Yeats (whose trochaic trimeters Davie has transformed into something far more spondaic, angular, and resistant), and Auden (whose political poetry resonates through all modern British verse). If Davie cannot reach the yielding, pliant, glowing strength of poetry at its most incandescent, he at least knows clearly where he stands, rebuking the aesthetic dance as "always / a self-abuser, glassed / in the pond of its own procedures." Yet he immediately contradicts his own disapproval, granting that sometimes, "God-induced," the dance "shakes free and runs loose . . . to high meadows." If his rhythms are more punitive than liberating, his poetic intelligence more abrasive than sympathetic, these characteristics make his pages more purely his own. In "Brantôme" he runs through the words by which he will symbolically describe himself before we can use them against him: "rarefied," "severe," "four-square," "austere," "fierce." We can urge against him a line from his own "Abbeyforde": "Clement time brings in its / Amnesties."

Fine though it is to have Davie's "Collected Poems," it is a crime that Chicago has not provided the book with an index of titles and first lines. Has there ever before been a modern "Collected Poems" stinted of such things? ♦

BOOKS BRIEFLY NOTED

FICTION

Einstein's Dreams
by Alan Lightman (Pantheon; $17)

LESS a novel than a collection of philosophical exercises, this diminutive book consists of five circumspect vignettes of Albert Einstein's life in the spring of 1905, and thirty brief speculative scenarios describing worlds where time is different from our common-sense experience of it. These scenarios ostensibly represent the involuntary dreams of the young Einstein, who is working as a patent clerk in Bern while completing his epochal paper on the special theory of relativity. Mr. Lightman's prose is admirably neat, and some of his alternate universes are ingenious, as in the world where each district of a town remains permanently stuck in one historical era, and people, too, are isolated in a permanent moment of joy or pain. In other scenarios, time runs in reverse, or the future is fixed and known, or a human life span is one day. This is a wholly literary conception of relativity, and a reader who expects the book to mediate between the layman and Einstein's incredibly complicated scientific breakthrough will be disappointed. The author's hidden theme is the poignancy of mortality, but this motif is rendered monotonous by a gloss of gamesmanship and model-making abstraction.

Watching TV with the Red Chinese
by Luke Whisnant (Algonquin; $17.95)

"LIFE imitates dreck," Dexter, the narrator of this novel, observes, and the story proceeds in various amusing and painful ways to show how. The dreck being imitated comes, not surprisingly, from TV, which to two of the three Chinese graduate students who have ventured from the People's Republic to study in Cleveland not only portrays shocking amounts of violence and sex but also wastes shocking amounts of time. This is not true for the youngest of them, Chen, who could not be happier than when he's learning football plays or the possibilities of unmarried sex. Warmth for the characters is delicately balanced with a sense of surrealism: Wa, Tzu, and Chen derive great hilarity from imitating Charlie Chan; are frightened by the sons of a black teacher downstairs who affect street jive and voodoo practices; and, throughout, are being interviewed and filmed by the local would-be auteur and his girlfriend, whose projected documentary is to be called "Watching TV with the Red Chinese."

GENERAL

The Invisible Epidemic: The Story of Women and AIDS
by Gena Corea (HarperCollins; $23)

A WORK of contained anger, in which the author, a feminist and a very able journalist, demonstrates that American women are routinely and universally discriminated against by the institutions that are combatting the AIDS crisis. There are few official statistics on the effects of AIDS on women, she says, and no adequate funding of research into women's health problems. Ironically, as a result, government health agencies have been reluctant to expand their definition of AIDS to include many of the symptoms that are specific to women. When the predominantly male medical community does concern itself with women and AIDS, women are seen "simply as vectors of disease to men and fetuses, as organisms, like insects, that transmit a pathogen." (Prostitutes infect their customers, but it's the customers who get the clinical treatment, the concern, and the sympathy.) Ms. Corea is a vigorous writer, but her book is no mere polemic; it is far-ranging in its coverage of its grim subject, and the abundant facts are illuminated by anecdotes and heart-wrenching personal stories.

Maximum City: The Biography of New York
by Michael Pye (Sinclair-Stevenson/ Trafalgar Square; $29.95)

IT is indicative of the robust self-confidence of the author of this work that he calls it "the" biography of New York. He tells us that "to find the continuities in the city . . . we need to see the city as a bundle of stories, which can be tracked down in the files of Amsterdam notaries, the records of English fox hunts, the diaries and letters of travellers, the guide-books and novels and movies and histories that touch on New York." In pell-mell fashion, he ransacks New York's rich and often scabrous history, beginning with a detailed description of New Amsterdam under the governorship of the brutal, peg-legged Peter Stuyvesant, and ending with an account of the police raid on the Stonewall bar in the Village, in 1969. Along the way, we are regaled with tales of corruption and vice, of civic glory and some civic virtue, of poverty and squalor, of the conspicuous extravagance of the rich. It makes for a mixture that has dubious socio-historical value but is highly entertaining.

No Friends but the Mountains: The Tragic History of the Kurds
by John Bulloch and Harvey Morris (Oxford; $25)

TWO British journalists, veterans of the Middle East, tell us, in this useful survey, that the Kurds, numbering about twenty million, constitute the "largest nation on earth without a state of its own," and that although the Kurds are now divided among Iran, Iraq, Turkey, Syria, Lebanon, and Armenia, they have been an identifiable people for at least four thousand years. For centuries, they were warriors—Saladin was a Kurd—and both the Ottoman and the Persian empires allowed them considerable autonomy. That kind of tolerance disappeared with the rise of modern nationalism, when, for example, central governments insisted on the use of a national language. (Kurdish is an Indo-European tongue, akin to Persian and Sanskrit.) Since the end of the First World War, great powers—Britain, the Soviet Union, and the United States—and local ones, such as Iran and, especially, Iraq, have manipulated the Kurds' own national aspirations and then betrayed them. ♦

SHOUTS AND MURMURS

THE CHEESE STANDS ALONE

BY VERONICA GENG

WILL President Clinton bog down in political debts owed to Party bosses, heavy-hitter campaign contributors, labor leaders, early supporters, and prominent Democrats who didn't hold grudges against him when they could have—i.e., Governor Mario Cuomo? Not if Clinton makes good use of Michael Dukakis's most creative legacy to political discourse: the cheese tray.

Back in July, 1988, the *Daily News* reported, Dukakis met with Cuomo to

> begin planning for the fall campaign in New York. Cuomo [was] asked whether he felt snubbed because he [had] not been invited to appear on the [Convention] platform with Dukakis. . . .
>
> "I was sitting there with him. He offered me cheese. He offered me food. I said hello to his mother. I didn't feel snubbed," Cuomo said.

Of course not! For no one feels snubbed when cheese is offered. In the Middle Ages, it was traditional for a man to indicate that a wheel of Cheddar was en route to the family of a woman he couldn't afford to rebuff; and today there is no more certain sign of eternally dangled promise than a nice hunk of fragrant Bel Paese presented on a Ritz cracker or, even better, held out on the palm of the hand. In politics, as in love—as in all human endeavors where we try to say more than we can say in words or deliver in costly and irrevocable actions—it is to cheese that we turn for the tendering of complex emotions, subtle hints, and just plain reassurance.

Dukakis has never been given full credit for the eloquence with which he spoke the language of cheese. Clinton is said privately to admire him for this skill, and during the 1992 New York primary campaign, when a certain anti-Italian slur hung ominously in the air over the State Capitol, the timely offer of an herbed-chèvre gift pack, from Little Rock Fancy Fromages, allegedly turned the situation around. But now Cuomo is just one of a great many allies to whom favor is due, and it remains to be seen how well Clinton will use assorted cheeses to work the ambiguous area that lies between snub and ambassadorship.

The following document was leaked to this magazine by a member of the Clinton transition team who has resigned his position on the Board of Directors of the National Council of Cheese Lobbyists:

The Hidden Language of Cheese

Swiss: This is a nightmare.

Stilton: There's a reporter right behind you. Don't make any kind of revealing gesture—just take the cheese.

Port du Salut: My wife will be doing that from now on.

Camembert on Wheat Thin: Any government contract you want, if you can persuade me my conscience is clear about Jesse Jackson.

Gouda: A ceremonial spot on Robert Reich's necktie.

Velveeta on Flatbrød: More figures needed from O.M.B. on the worst-case scenario if we develop the courage to blow you off as a cynical parasite.

Feta on Pita: That was then, and this is now.

Cube of Laughing Cow on Toothpick: Sir (or Madam), does your hypocrisy know no bounds? The spectacle of you and your ilk turns even my stomach. Request denied.

Part-Skim Mozzarella on Saltine: See that man? He's a U.S. marshal, here to arrest you for trying to bribe a federal official.

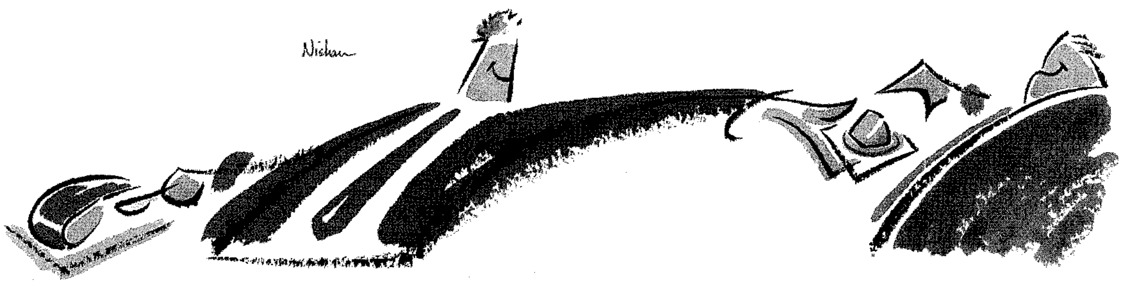
Provolone: Get your snout out of the public trough!

Triple-Crème on Celery Stick: Boy, if things were only different, we could be somewhere, just the two of us, the banks of a trout stream in the Dordogne, trailing our fingers in the water and talking about books and ideas till the sun goes down, then back to the inn for oysters and white wine and a serious discussion about philosophy and life—but instead you're laboring under the misapprehension that kissing my ass at a fund-raiser bought you a free ride on the back of the American taxpayer, you toadying little weasel.

Schmierkase on Toast Wedge: Maybe by 1994 or 1995 something will shake loose, but I'd feel like a bum making promises I can't keep.

Herbed-Chèvre Gift Pack: The Supreme Court.

American: Would you like to say hello to my mother? ♦



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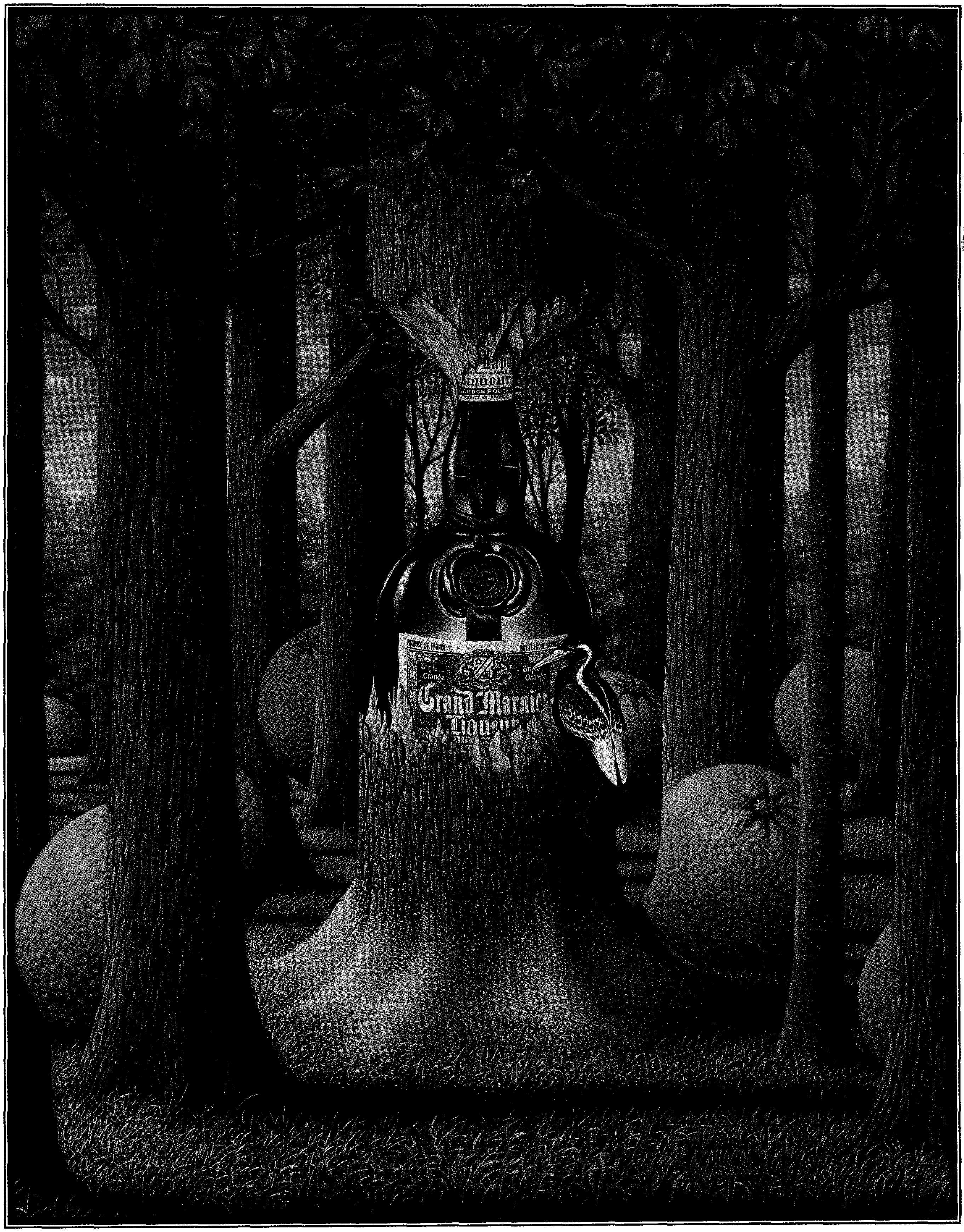
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